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FREDERIC HARRISON

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Thoughts and Memories

By

AUSTIN HARRISON

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Chapter I

A VICTORIAN PREAMBLE

A YOUNG man in the Victorian epoch at any time, let us say, between 1840 and Jubilee year, desirous of entering into conversation with an elder—over the port at dinner when the ladies had retired, or perhaps as the old gentleman stood in front of the fire with his arms behind his back sagely holding out the lapels of his coat—would, an he were wise, or unless the object of his attention happened to be a book-maker, have framed his opening remark with some such inquiry as, "Well, sir, and what do you think of the situation?" And after a convenient and conscientious pause, in which the older man would have assumed an air of grave consideration, age would throw a kindly smile at youth and reply: "I cannot exactly say, but it looks pretty bad." After that—after that, of course, conversation would have depended upon what either or both of them had to say. Anyhow, such was not a bad way to break the ice in those days, and I give it as an illustration or perspective of a time which is peculiarly elusive, for it was an age of solemnity rather than of contrast; above all, it was an age of respect.

The preceding era is far more visible, because far more personal. We can "see" Nelson. We can catch the Iron Duke's oaths and apostrophes. We can understand Georgian England from Byron who ran away from it, and from Shelley who was chased away. But from the 'forties onwards, things stiffen and grow nebulous, and as we enter the long reign of "good manners" there is less and less

revelation, and even the great poets become impersonal, dulcet and harmonious, and no bard more so than Tennyson. Albert-Victorian England had ceased to be Byronic. The Corsair touch had gone. The French war had left its nemesis in three decades of misery. But in the " hungry " 'forties my father was a boy, and it is not until the 'fifties that his life may be said to begin, and by that time England had rapidly recovered and was already steeped in august prosperity despite the wars, revolutions, rebellions and crises which tested that eventful period.

And so in the dazzling gallery—one might even say allegory—of Charles Dickens it is not easy to get the hang of the time, for Dickens studiously avoided the portrayal of the essential personage, the Victorian " gentleman " who had no " history," and the " great " middle class of iron and coal and steam, who were already the new gentry, reserving his pen for that crude, insular, angular obscurity of town life coming out of the Reform Act of 1832, which had handed over Parliament to Capital. We have his England " in the valley of the shadow of the Law," and his museum of " immortals," almost too good to be true, but the truth is this quarry was an underworld heavily larded with tinsel; it was not the England that ruled, though it may partly explain how she came to rule, and even Thackeray, like Disraeli who succeeded him, seems to land us too consistently in the pantry. But Thackeray as politician does enable us to peer underneath, and in a flash we have a living picture of the " other " England which was anything but droll or Pecksniffian. Here is a scene, in 1857, which is illuminating. Thackeray, who probably was a far more earnest social reformer than is generally recognized, is lecturing on Dukes to a select audience of " young " Britain, of the University type, hanging on the great man's lips. One of them goes home in deep meditation and is even moved to write a letter to a friend—for people wrote in those days. He says: " Dickery and Thackins " (an Oxford jest on Dickens and Thackeray, just as we might

to-day speak of " Chestoc and Bellterton ") " are certainly undermining our principles "; and he complains that the " Circumlocution office " of the satirist is supplanting the " constitution."

That seems to give us a definite idea of things two years before the appearance of Darwin's famous book. The youth in question was my father. He is clearly " concerned." But it is the nature of his concern that is interesting, for such is not a horse or a girl, it is principle. He is thinking impersonally, heroically, constitutionally, of the situation, and he looks upon the two great comic writers of the age, much as a healthy young Tory to-day might look upon the social writings of, say, Bertrand Russell or of Sidney Webb, with considerable " anxiety." It is useful to remember that this was before Bright's Parliamentary Reform which shook Britain for ten years. We are plumb in the centre of Victorianism. My father is twenty-six; has left the Church; is burning with social ardour to reform and act; is looking for a fighting sociology, yet he finds Thackeray almost too strong ! This seems to me a gauge. We get the velocity of that time. The tremendous significance of precedent, which ruled England, is apparent; and, of course, an age of precedent is symbolically one of prejudice.

My father's anxiety on behalf of the constitution was typical, for the essential word in the Victorian epoch was the " British Constitution." That was the post which no man " dared " to touch. It was nothing, it meant everything. I suppose it really was one of the greatest historical instruments ever invented by man, and, like the Church, it, too, was " mystic "; at least, it was not to be found in print or on parchment, and until Walter Bagehot began his masterly analysis of it probably very few people could have given an intelligent explanation of what it exactly was or even where it stood tucked away in the precincts of a blind alley known to a few Metropolitan cabmen, who plied in the neighbourhood of the great squares, as Downing Street.

The " Constitution " is no longer a mystery, it is a virtue and assumed, and every Socialist knows all that there is to be known about it; but in the robust Victorian days it was the big shining emblem of life and magnificence, which towered over people's heads—a Britannic Colossus of the modern world. Its serviceableness was obvious and too significant to be missed. It was the fount of Britain's massive and prodigiously imaginative dignity which ultimately was to destroy all imagination in these islands. No man questioned the authority of this spirit which stood at once above the King and below the People, and yet it was a thing that moved and had life. From it, the policeman derived his sanction, the House of Commons its majesty, and the Lords their grace. And, like all divinities, it was unseen. This was the basis of its power and the magic of its trust, and its reality consisted in the simple process of application. It worked like nothing else, because it was so humanly *possible;* which also (as Bagehot pointed out) was the chief merit of the House of Peers. We are inclined to-day to forget what this reverence implied to our ancestry. Briefly, it signified religion.

The Victorian era began as a reaction introduced by the domestic Philistinism of Prince Albert, partly because he was a foreigner and partly because of his prudery, who set the country by the ears. But Victorianism itself was a growth or attitude which had no psychology, indeed it can hardly be explained otherwise, and it was this quality, the quality of sanctimonious success, that gave to every branch of life its pomp and form. Dickens never wearied of squeezing fun out of this religion of self-sufficiency.

Insularity became a cult, and phlegm its outward sign of culture. The whole spirit and governance of the country consolidated into a religion which functioned because every man was a part of it, and the whole was greater than its parts. Our universities and schools were monastic institutions; thus when my father was at Oxford there were

no married tutors. Sex was not supposed to exist, except when a child was born. It must have been amazingly dull yet none the less magnificent. Every house resembled a castle which every owner aspired to blot out from the outside world in a nimbus of self-respect. Every threshold was an altar of male egotism. I can well recall the uproar, which almost became national, caused by Professor Tyndall when he discovered that the Hindhead was available for folk to walk and build houses upon. Things were like that. Men thought in finalities.

Hence the stupendous stateliness of old Westminster —the silk hat, the evening-dress sittings, the classical quotations, the lugubrious wholesomeness of its function. For the Constitution lived and depended upon "form," since its reality depended upon sanction. Out of it, as its secondary and legendary manifestation, there arose the English code—the "gentleman," the straight bat at cricket, and all that we understand by "fair play," our solemn institutionalism, our prodigious snobbery, our religious sense of *position* as distinct from merit, our insular rectitude, our superb and challenging spirit of assumption which we playfully attribute to common sense. Government depended upon conduct. This was the root principle of Victorian life. It is easy to see how such a standard reacted upon affairs, from the Prime Minister to the street shoe-black who, in a bright red jacket, polished one's boots for a penny. Things were removable —that was the secret. Intolerance was the word, because the unwritten law was tolerance or removability: and this applied to Royalty, the Government, the Lords, even the Constitution, since only Parliament made authority applicable, and Parliament was itself removable.

Our "team" sense derived from this society which ruled itself by virtue of its own gravity; hence, of course, the power of the law. The effects of this system were authentic and pre-eminently political in character, and in form, conservative. As no tenure of government was fixed, so the obvious way to secure tenure was to fix or

secure the pediments of sanction, and it was the collateral security that mattered. Hence the political genius of the Briton. And as the spirit of governance was mobile and alterable, so the sense of governance lay in rendering it static and unalterable, which is the theory of what is called Toryism. Even cricket was played in a top-hat—it emphasized the difference in class. The interpretation of the British Constitution grew and stiffened into an organism of political, class, religious, social and æsthetic regularization in which it was the pattern—thus the cut of a man's trousers—that mattered. We pigeon-holed the Island. We stabilized the gold sovereign—I can well recollect a generous uncle, who annually distributed gold on Christmas Day, referring to the coin as a fixed and unalterable unit for all time of precisely twenty shillings; we stabilized decorum, dress, food, behaviour, thought, language, opinion, pudding, political economy, poetry, and what not, including a man's taste in neckties, and a fellow who infringed against the rules of convention was a " bounder," or, to use an eminently respectable word of the period, which has rather gone out of fashion, a " blackguard."

We cannot appreciate the glory of the Victorians unless we take into due consideration their sense of responsibility which must in those days have appeared to them overwhelming. Consider their heritage. Trafalgar, Waterloo, gold, Adam Smith, the British Constitution, ships, the Empire, India—our fathers had everything, and daily they read the Bible. No wonder they stabilized the theory of money, for Adam Smith with his comfortable plutonomy was just the man for a people who had so much of the wealth of this world and kept on finding and absorbing more. This sense of responsibility probably accounts for the terrifying suavity that enveloped Victorian life, and to cap their belongings the Victorians invented even an eleventh commandment: " never get found out."

Matthew Arnold may be called the exquisite of that age, so entirely admirable in so many different ways, so

conscientiously sweet and mellow. " For us " (he writes) " who believe in right reason, the framework of society, that theatre on which this august drama has to unroll itself, is sacred," etc. Note the word, sacred. How different to Swift, or Sterne, or Carlyle, or Voltaire! That sentence is pure Victorianism. Curiously enough, in a master of classic form, it seems elaborately odd. " Right " reason sounds tautological. " August," as the adjective descriptive of our workaday existence, is almost provincial journalism. The word theatre is affected. One feels the intense seriousness of a man who can write like that about the game of politics as the " framework of society "; but its want of humour is obvious, and certainly the Victorians cannot be accused of levity. This pontifical manner typifies the period. A Biblical gravity fell upon these Islands, hardly to be disturbed till the Pagan thunder of Swinburne shook every pulpit in the land. Style, like respectability, hardened into a spate in accordance with the ample, spacious, leisurely progress of an epoch which only had five and a half days in a week. The result was monotony. It is the refrain in Tennyson's poetry. It almost took the form of a taboo worship, formalizing life into strata on a card index. The man, or personal note, went out of prose into rhythm, and out of poetry into melody. The Victorians were so self-conscious of their possessions, so eager to be worthy of them, and so inebriated with their own virtue, that life became a question of manner, of breeding, of correctness and tone—which is not a good soil for art or creation. " All peasants have style," the Frenchman says, but the Victorian ruled out the man. In its smug, triumphant epopee, the age was glorious, but seen from posterity it rather resembles an enamelled frieze round a statue " sacred to the value of the pound sterling."

When, therefore, my father attended Thackeray's lectures and heard him poking " wholesome " quiet fun at kings and nobles, we can well imagine " how he felt " as a hot-headed youth just down from Oxford and himself

trembling on the abyss of heretical "blackguardism," which was regarded as the worst kind. At once his Victorianism is obvious. The spectacle of Thackeray lampooning the "upstairs" folk in public would have filled him with subversive ideas mingled with revolt at such presumptive impropriety, and he probably thought, as all Victorians consistently did think, that the country was "going to the dogs." This phrase, so uniquely characteristic of British mentality, of course derives from the fluid political structure of his constitution, which makes him inordinately sensitive to change in any of its secondary characteristics, and is the obvious explanation of our inveterate optimism which necessarily adjusts its focus to vistas of stability and so cloaks everything that is or was in measured gasps of jollification; expressions such as "good old" or the "old firm" are coherently Victorian and part of the Constitution. I can picture my father listening to Thackeray's jibes with doubtful admiration, secretly wondering—what next? My father was pretty right. Mill left public life for an ivory tower, but Thackeray's attack on "snobs" has proved historical. Art, as usual, is the creative instrument. *Mr. Yellowplush* was the first stone cast at the British Constitution.

But my father was not only a Victorian, or he, too, might have ended as a lord; he was far too eclectic to be merely that; he was a religious Victorian, and even so the distinction requires qualification. To be a religious Victorian in 1850-1860 was entirely correct, provided a man was "religious," or sacrilegious (which was the new thing), in the accepted sense, which my father was not: he was, in fact, on the "wrong" side of religion, and even on the wrong side of the new school of irreligion. Long before the great new word blew into English life, which caused Carlyle to growl about a "damnification monkey theory," and split the country into rival torrents of disputation, my father had come to the considered conclusion that he was unsuitable for Holy Orders, and must indeed set out in active opposition. This, needless to say, at that time

was a grave decision which amounted to a social "offence." Order could be broken and even the law attacked [on Saturday nights], but to declare oneself a "heretic" was to tilt against the established conditions of class and State, and to incur the sovereign displeasure of both. I still feel encouraged at the memory of his audacity, and I can well believe how "pained" and "shocked" his relations must have been on receipt of the news of "Frederic's" misdemeanour. As a matter of fact, his father turned out to be a "brick," and allowed him two more years at Oxford "for reading."

We are apt to smile to-day at the recollection of Victorianism which certainly was a hard, ugly, intolerant and quite preposterous period of prosperity—which, by the way, probably always is hard, ugly and intolerant. Its faults survive in stone, in furniture, in glass, in conservatories, in stoves and "basements," and sundry other vestigia; yet though the things left by our forbears may seem heavy and outrageous, the Victorians themselves were not only doughty doers but they can be seen to-day to have been bold and creative thinkers who shone with historical lustre. Even the Constitution was not infallible, and after the introduction of the word "evolution," neither was the Church. We underrate ourselves when we underrate the Victorians, for we are precisely what these men made us. The England of the nineteenth century was the battle-ground of liberty of thought.

A modern, reading Dickens for the first time, can hardly form an idea of the real and stately England ruled by the men about whom Dickens did not write, and he might even conceive of that time as one of benevolent and uproarious fun—which probably explains why "our" children fail to delight in the novelist. Governing England moved on another plane. We may even speak of two governing Englands: the one representing prosperity, the other progress. First, there was the Britain of the gold standard, of India, Empire and "coaling stations," representing a real live supremacy in gold, coal, iron,

banking, shipping, cotton, etc., in conjunction with the benefits deriving from a monopoly of Free Trade, which had passed from a nation into a civilization intensely proud of the grand old Wellingtonian traditions and of all who held the bridge, so to speak, under the zealous care of the bishops, of the city merchants and of St. Stephens. This was the palpable, hard, auriferous and intolerant Britain that made trade and commerce an affair of religious scruple and imperialism a religion of cash honesty. This was the Britannia of the Good Queen which seemed to impart to the austere and augmented consciousness of its momentum a note almost of finality, so serene and sure and stately was its function. Over this edifice flew the Union Jack. But there was another life and a different England, which the novelists did not touch, and which wrought apart. I mean the England of the " great " Victorians. It may be called the England of Oxford.

About a year ago I was looking at Magdalen College with a party among whom was a demobilized sergeant, and, pointing to its beautiful lines with a sweep of his arm, this man observed in a quiet and reasonable tone that made the words sound all the more impressive: " that is what we want for all our sons." Certainly before 1914 few men of his type would have made such a remark, and it seemed to me to close definitely and for ever what we understood by Victorianism. The real difference is one of tradition, and it is that which has gone. To-day, a man may eat mustard with mutton even in polite company, if he so pleases (the French always do), but in Victorian England a man who put mint-sauce on roast beef, or marmalade on his bacon, or watered his claret, lost caste and became, as a human associate, " untouchable." Probably no society ever was so formalized and patented as that of our ancestors, and, of course, the unwritten rules and regulations of Public Schools' etiquette derives from this institutionalism, and survives. In Victorian Oxford the " real wealth " of Britain was deposited, not

only because the University was the chief ecclesiastical centre of control, but because it actually did control the national intellect, linked up with a few men who wrote books.

We are apt to forget this other and duplex England, as also what it stood for. In those proud days commerce was " bad form " and to advertise was an offence. In the " other " England Oxford was the magic Temple. Practically, it stood for every virtue, from theology to ministerial office, for not to be able to let off a Latin tag in Parliament was to be an " outsider," which was a terrible word in those palmy days. Oxford was the great mitred institution of class authority whose jurisdiction was unassailable. It was the grand tradition, and not to have been at one or the other of the two Universities—and in Victorian England everything was either or, and there was no alternative—placed a man out of the pale of social preferment. There were the boat race, the cricket match, the Union, the two blues, the antiquity, the clerical mandate, the fees and the tithes—to enforce the lesson; but the strength of the two Universities lay in the authority of their learning, which was the vested interest of the Church and the intellectual investment of the country. These two monastic institutions dominated life because the knowledge that men had derived from them, and in their hallowed walls, so remote from the outer shell of the working system of ships and bills of lading, the intellect of England was cultivated and distributed, and there, like Wolsey, it presided. Thus the Church controlled education and religion, and in this way it controlled the " gentry." It is here, about 1850, that the story of my father begins.

It is doubtful, to-day, whether a group of college students and a tutor or two could shake the country, for Fleet Street has decentralized power and the modern pace is the aggregate. But this was not so in 1850. What Oxford said mattered, and about that time Oxford was feverishly concerned with religion and with the Liberal

forward latitudinarianism — or intellectual attempt to break through the old obscurantism. Oxford represented England's message; and in young Oxford about the middle of last century a critical centre was forming, destined later to convulse the intellectual thought of the country. It was here that the nucleus of English Positivism struck root and simmered until the appearance of Darwin's "Origin of Species" in 1859, destined to date the war that broke out between science and theology; this was also the year of Mill's "Liberty." In those days my father was one of the chief schismatics, and when the famous Oxford book, "Essays and Reviews," appeared shortly after Darwin's projection, my father was asked to draw attention to, or as we should say, "puff" it, which he did in his Essay (his first) "Neo-Christianity"; which, publicly, dated him. It may be assumed that the great struggle on behalf of liberty of thought—and this was the actual achievement of the Victorian epoch—went on over the heads of the multitude and practically unnoticed by the vested interests of the community. It is not to be supposed that Threadneedle Street troubled itself much about the "seven anti-christs," as they were called, who wrote the "Essays and Reviews," or that the new geology and the new criticism, or any of the piercing thoughts that percolated through from France in the least disturbed the massive sway and balance of commercial Britain. "Business as usual" was not the ruling maxim for nothing, and probably Dr. Jowett was as little known to the general public of his day as is Herbert Spencer in ours. The Victorians were well-behaved, even in the absence of a cheap press, and no man, not even a lunatic, so much as threw a banana either at Dr. Congreve or my father or even at Ruskin when he eventually discarded the stones of Venice for his drawing-room exposition of Socialism.

To understand the upheaval caused at that period by intellectual Oxford, we must remember that Darwin's book seemed to strike at the basic structure of English

life and at the statics of its religious mechanism, which may be summed up as orthodoxy, and as this primarily implicated and disturbed Oxford so it inevitably implicated and disturbed England. It was a challenge to our effective stabilization, dissolving the traditions of antiquity and even the citadel of our oldest and most venerable institutionalism: in short, it divided the rulers. Hence the commotion which started in 1869. The great ecclesiastical class control of the community no longer agreed upon fundamental principle, for though John Stuart Mill probably did not reach the " bloods " of Piccadilly, the monkey theory was too good a joke to be lost, and it went the round of the country, as is the way of good propaganda. It was Darwin's book that dramatized young Oxford into history; but it may fairly be said that from 1859 onwards the Victorian age becomes an acute literary controversy and a great movement of release in which Oxford and all that it stood for is the central argument.

After the Napoleonic wars, yet still more as the reaction to the French Revolution, Oxford had sunk into a lethargy which continued until about 1830, when the religious movement known as Tractarianism, or revival of the Church spirit, burst into active form, largely under the leadership of Newman. But the general unsettled conditions of 1848 in Europe disturbed and split this Anglo-Catholic revival, and when my father went to Oxford, many of the old sanctuaries had already gone, and things were ripening for a change which was destined to assume a sternly intellectual shape. The sad fate that befell Mark Pattison and the conditions governing elections to the heads of colleges are recorded in his Memoirs. A great spiritual and demolitionary activation was to begin, and my father entered the University just as the fires that were to " relight " England were smouldering.

That is why I said that my father was on the " wrong side " of religion. Hume, Cuvier and Kant had done their great work, and Mill was completing his; Hegel had

captured the imagination with his " Absolute Idealism "; shyly and timidly, men were beginning to take notice of the new German theological criticism; geology had arisen with pertinent reflections upon the chronology of " creation," upsetting dates, suggesting calculations and refuting orthodox speculation, and on the top of this disturbingly " unpopular " science there appeared the new zoology of Darwin and Haekel with brazen and " fantastic " theories which set cultured England ablaze. A new vocabulary arose with big new meanings. Henceforth the philosophers and critics were to be Agnostics, and Carlyle was to be deposed from his throne of " duty." It was thus that my father drifted out of Oxford and out of the stream. For temperamentally he was a Gnostic in the early Christian sense, rather than an Agnostic. In other words, he was too naturally religious or spiritual to be content with any process of criticism or demolition. He could not just " make war " with science. Across the channel a new religious philosophy already existed, which was the true origin of all the subsequent philosophies of Reason, and in Auguste Comte (1830-40), who had rejected both theology and metaphysics for a religion of social service founded upon demonstrable data of science and experience, my father found, what Oxford had failed to give him, both intellectual and religious sustenance.

But France was still too near to " Boney " to be safe, as my father was to discover. Thus it came about that he stood outside, though not in any sense aloof from, the school of Agnostic thought which under Mill, Herbert Spencer, Huxley, G. H. Lewis, Morley, Leslie Stephen, etc., was destined to lead and control English rationalism, not because, as he was accused at the time, he was too " heretical," but because he was not, religiously speaking, heretic enough. He did not want to " burn " any Jew or Church, and I fear the great Agnostics looked upon him as a man who was not " playing the game." In associating himself with a foreign system of philosophy somewhat alien to the Protestanism of this country, or as one may

perhaps style it, the social genius of the race, he undoubtedly lost no small part of his position at home, and in the process, temporarily at any rate, some of his friends. This latter loss was to him an unkind cut which I question whether he ever really got over. It differentiated and sundered him. He became a target instead of a co-worker in a great cause, and so when the literary attack on orthodoxy and the "right" of persecution burst out in 1869, which plunged the philosophers into excited discussion, my father was neither actively on the side of the " fallen " nor of the angels; he could not, as Fitzjames Stephen put it, " join up in baiting the Roman bull," or join up fully with the rationalism of the Metaphysical Society, in which Huxley was the great dialectitian, in baiting any Church; as a fact, my father and Cardinal Manning often met and discussed Positivism, indeed my father slyly intimates in his " Autobiography " that Manning perhaps entertained hopes of " converting " him, and there can be no question about the reality of their friendship. The truth is that the " dry light " of the metaphysicians in no wise sufficed my father who was consequently left suspended between the ardour and clericalism of Gladstone, Manning, Magee, Martineau, Mark Pattison and Lord Selborne, etc., and the challenging dialectics of Huxley, Clifford, Tyndall and Fitzjames Stephen; for if spiritually he sympathized with the theologians, intellectually he sympathized with the Agnostics; and so, like Tennyson who, as my father records, never " interposed with a remark," he, too, felt lonely and unsatisfied, for he was that rather curious and rare blend, a philosopher who was incurably religious, and to him Agnosticism was little more than an intellectual exercise.

It only shows how geological and geographical things are, even religion. Had Comte not been, my father would almost inevitably have joined forces with the Island philosophers, and with reasonable luck he might have emulated Mill and Morley and graduated even into a political " success "; but Positivism enlisted and Euro-

peanized his sympathies, and always rather on French lines, so that his fellow synthetists, geologians, zoologists, essayists and Agnostics never quite understood the ardent enthusiasms of my father for all kinds and degrees of the "under dog," an animal which in the spreading days of British imperialism was never so popular, pace the Liberals, as the man who "had the ships." My father was thus, politically, for purely religious or moral reasons, and I presume they are synonymous, continually getting into hot water. Now it was Poland, now the Zulus, or it was the Boers, the Afghans, the Italians, the Japanese, the Pekinese, and Huxley thought it was the Pope. He was never on the popular or "right" side. Even his life-long friend, Lord Morley, used to get annoyed with him on this point, and I remember him once saying in almost a nettled tone: "Fred, do you think we are never right then?": which rebuke rather disconcerted my father, who was in every sense stamped with the quality of a native islander. Personally, I doubt whether my father did wholly realize the distinctly French aroma of Comte's "Polity," or, rather, why it necessarily differentiated him, for psychology was neither his nor Comte's province; and I can understand the vexed astonishment with which the great British philosophers, largely building upon Comte, who had invented sociology, viewed the promising author of "Neo-Christianity" with his pro-French proclivities and interpretations respecting the creation—in the speculative sense, and the ownership—in the actual sense, of the universe.

My father paid the penalty of his opinions, as men do; indeed his Positivist Europeanism and detoxicated catholicity made people sometimes wonder whether he had any opinions. Just when he appeared singled out to be the spokesman of Victorian liberty, some little People would cry for help in some remote part of the globe, and instantly my father would tilt at the oppressor, like a man in a rage. Or, again, having long before reached the clearance ground of the English philosophers through his knowledge of

Comte, he could not take a " back seat " when Herbert Spencer appeared years later with a rival synthetic philosophy, since the concept already existed across the Channel, even long before Mill's " Logic," in a complete system of sociological governance comprising the creation of a Western Republic of the " five advanced nations which, since the time of Charlemagne, have always constituted a political whole ": which had ever since 1855 been my father's religion.

The moral is that a man should not go outside his country for his religion, not, that is, if he wants to succeed in a worldly sense, and it was this that also " killed " Mill after he had taken up the cause of woman. Before Darwin, theology was not a discussible subject, and when it became discussible the heat engendered was fierce. For example, an American told me that when he was a youth (about 1878) he was found reading a volume by Tom Paine, and he was informed that if he did not " there and then " burn the book, he would be ostracized and might even be tarred and feathered. Such was the feeling in those righteous times. It explains the age, and it explains the Victorians: I submit that it also explains my father. He was not wholly of the old or of the new thought. Now Morley would reproach him with too pietistic a reverence for the Catholic mediaevalism of Comte; now Fitzjames Stephen would slate him for " indifference " to his intellectual convictions; now orthodoxy would upbraid him for sacriligeous cynicism, and now he would blame himself for not being " catholic " enough. He stood in between the Churches and Agnosticism, as a Positivist who may be said to be both Christian and agnostic. Not an easy position for a man bursting with social and sociological enthusiasm, who was in all essentials a Victorian. Still less so to one who, before all, loved mankind and his country and every pebble on the beaches around it.

As my father's life was essentially an English presentation of Auguste Comte's philosophy, perhaps this is the place to indicate to those who may not have heard of him

who Comte was, and how this impecunious French teacher of mathematics, whom Mill, Grote and a few others actually subsidized for a couple of years in the 'forties of last century, exercised so profound an influence upon Victorian and European thought all through the last century. The matter can be explained easily through a simile. If a " scrap of paper " caused Britain to enter the war in 1914, so a strip of water is the explanation of the hostility to Comte's " Positivism," which also was my father's life-long difficulty. A few dates will be useful. Comte outlined his sociology in 1819-1826, subsequently writing his " Philosophy " in 1830-1842; Mill published his " System of Logic " in 1842, and admitted that Comte had greatly contributed towards the work. This explains Mill's signal kindness towards Comte who had lighted the fire of the new European criticism. But for the Corsican and Robespierre, Comte's works would no doubt have penetrated into this country easily enough; as it was, practically only Mill and one or two other scholars had heard of him, though Miss Martineau had gallantly set about translating some of the volumes. This was the position up to Mill's great book on logic. But " Boney " was not the only reason for English hostility; Positivism concerned the " constitution " and so the national religion, for in those days the Victorians styled themselves Protestants as distinct from Roman Catholics, and what they said they meant. Now, Comte was a child of the France of 1789, and, in addition, was thought to sympathize with Catholicism, chiefly because he did not sympathize with Protestantism, even though he had struck out theology, had refused to be married in a church, and admitted only what was " demonstrable " in belief or speculation.

Anyway, it is certain that the French Revolution, which had destroyed feudalism in France, had inspired Comte's sociology; and England in the revolutionary period of 1848 had an intense dislike of revolution in any shape or form, and in particular, of anything savouring of a new

Jacobin Club. Comte had passed from pure philosophy to polity or application, and it was this disturbing projection which caused him to be regarded in our country as an "agitator." Moreover, Comte himself had become practically active. In 1848 the Positivist Society was founded in Paris, designed, it would seem, as an intellectual judiciary of government as outlined in the "Positive Polity." This was still eleven years before Darwin "saved the situation" with the blessed word, "evolution," so that French Positivism was viewed as a political movement, and a Jacobin movement to boot, headed by a mathematical "maniac" who had dreams of Napoleonizing religion by eliminating "revelation" and uprooting the pillars of state and society. This attitude was accentuated by reason of Comte's early antagonism to Protestantism which he regarded as metaphysical; in fact, he had attributed the "failure" of the French Revolution to metaphysics. This explains our British political opposition to Comte. His "Philosophy"—yes, this the intellectuals were perforce interested in; but his "Polity"—bah! that was revolution, and so Mill and the Agnostics savagely trounced him. Comte crept surreptitiously into England via Mill and Miss Martineau, and my father has recorded that Dr. Congreve had, or pretended to have, no knowledge of Comte in 1853, when he was talking a kind of "Positivism" at Oxford (Comte died in 1857). One must also remember that in 1840 France and England were nearly at war over Turkey.

The English attitude is revealed in Lord Morley's essay on Comte, originally published in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (new edition). One can see why and how it arose. Comte, who was inclined to be a "rebel," perhaps did mean "business" with his new religious philosophy which to a Briton in those days must have seemed alarmingly impious or not impious enough; for after Darwin's "Descent of Man" (1871), which let loose a flood of "daring" speculations, the "spirit of compromise" seemed more than ever suited to the con-

stitution and even to the interpretation of evolution and continuity, as derived from an ape; hence Comte with his logical classifications and (as we inevitably thought) illogical applications, which are French in conception and politico—philosophic in form, would hardly be commendable to the *laissez faire* Victorian: who dearly loved a little mysticism and had never produced a real world-philosopher—which, of course, was Herbert Spencer's opportunity to rid Britain of Comte in 1862, the date of the appearance of his " Synthetic Philosophy."

In its reactions upon my father, who stuck to Comte, the position now becomes clear, though Positivism as a political idea had died in France long before it was heard of here and, paradoxically, was reconstituted by English opposition. He was looked upon with a shade of suspicion, and all the more as there was an Anglo-Catholic movement in the country, just as in the great war a man was " suspect " who refused to believe that the Germans made pea-soup out of their dead. He was " suspect " politically, because Comte was a Frenchman; he was suspect spiritually, because of the national recoil from any philosophy savouring of Catholicism; he was suspect intellectually, because Herbert Spencer and the Agnostics wanted to establish British liberty of thought arising out of the school of Mill, not a French religious satrapy; finally, he was suspect because while a heretic was an intelligible " ruffian " a religious heretic was regarded as an atrocity who belonged to neither the one side nor the other, and it was a time when " sides " had become inevitable, respectable and even intelligent.

One could be an iconoclast, an ethicist, or even an atheist, as was originally Lord Morley, at any rate, an English free-thinker; but to follow Comte was another matter, and so my father found himself tossed between the waves of orthodoxy and the tidal pull of its critics. He had to face the four winds of criticism in times when thought and words were flying fast, and not always to heaven, for what to-day we can see to be nice little

differences in perspective, in diagnosis, in form and in spirit, were then "practical politics." It is astonishing in the circumstances how well he came through. A slip of the pen or tongue, and he might have shared the fate of Foote who went to prison under the cruel laws of blasphemy. One had to be careful in 1850. Eventually, he had to quit the bar. He might even, like Tom Paine, some decades before, have had to quit the country.

I think this ought to be said, for it accounts for much of my father's attitude and, in particular, what his critics have styled his "insensibility." Darwin was an Englishman, Comte was a Frenchman—such, psychologically, was the position; and these were the two great lights of the nineteenth century.

Victorianism can be divided into two parts: up to Darwin, and after Darwin. My father, who was a Positivist or unconscious evolutionist some years before 1859, was thus forced by circumstances to become a "sectarian," and a semi-Papal one at that. I do not suggest for a moment that this incapacitated him, but it restricted him and continuously tried him, though he took an active part in 1875-77 in the Church Disestablishment movement for which he worked with many others, shoulder to shoulder, with Joseph Chamberlain. But the liberation movement failed to develop, and my father in the struggle which arose out of it between the Episcopal Church and Evangelical Nonconformity, in which he was quite out of his depths, merely joined issue on grounds of "public equity" and as a Comtist championing religious tolerance. It was after this agitation which looked so promising that Newton Hall was founded.

There was also another aspect of Positivism which jarred, which again may be called a matter of national style, and which implicated my father; namely, the *étatisme* of a humanist sociology, which was a concept alien and horrifying to the individualism of the British spirit. It was this that antagonized Mill and Morley. In a word, Comte's philosophy, at any rate as originally

conceived and intentioned, is didactic, and the British Constitution is not that. The Victorians could triumphantly point to the spirit of " sweet reasonableness " as the card and calendar of their being, and they were not going " to be told " by a foreigner how to reach Utopia. Huxley, with his mordant wit, made pithy use of this aspect which, moreover, seemed antagonistic to the soothing process of evolution. The notion of a new " Holy Alliance " of religion, as projected by Comte, was anathema to that gorgeous insularity on which the sun never sets, which viewed Europe from the angle of " balance of power "; for though we are peculiarly susceptible to sentiment, romance, religion and poetry, we resolutely harden our hearts against anything in the nature of a doctrine, and Positivism suggested governance by teaching, whereas our hobby is preaching. The Positivist in England has consequently always had a rugged time of it. Our idiosyncrasy is to " rag," and my father got " ragged " pretty roughly on that score. I ought perhaps to say that Mill always welcomed the genius of Comte and that Herbert Spencer ultimately quite ceased to oppose the religion of humanity. None the less, Positivism for years was regarded as a joke. It undoubtedly incommoded my father.

Comte's idea was to make religion a science, which does not seem to be the idea that most men have of religion. Religion, as the mystic centre of man, is a passion which, unfortunately, may be anything but scientific. A man has this emotional centre, or he has not, and those who have this feeling in pronounced form are still the fanatics of this world, perhaps the only fanatics left. Thus a man so soulfully rapt and genuine as Richard Jefferies can even in our time protest that all the theories and systems of man, from Aristotle to the latest denomination, are " useless," and in a notable passage in that strangely beautiful but clearly " psychasthenic " confession, " The Story of my Heart," he invokes a prayerful and mystic animism perilously reminiscent of the " magic " that has prompted all religious fanaticism. Richard Jefferies clearly

lacked the historic sense. His religion is emotionalism. He suggests a psycho-analytical "case." He worships the rhapsody of self-externalization. My father was the exact opposite to that kind of a mind. His soul-hunger took the form of earthly consideration. He was not concerned with his Heaven, he wanted a little Love on earth. But this, as Voltaire suggested, is not so interesting as "mysticism," and modern herd-psychology would hardly disagree. Many future generations will probably continue to linger over the rhapsodies of Jefferies' soul. How many people to-day so much as know the meaning of the "Statics" of Herbert Spencer?

There was yet another point about Positivism which flustered our fathers—woman. The Victorians were not feminists, and my father typically reflects the attitude of his age when he tells us in "De Senectute" that as a boy he was "disgusted to learn that it was a girl who succeeded to the throne" (1837). In those days, women were supposed to "keep their place," and more was not asked of them. They were the conservators of the male dispensation. None the less, it was Harriet Martineau who first translated Comte, and she accomplished this difficult task at a pace which still remains one of the feats of literature; and her place was taken by George Eliot, who was to all intents and purposes a Humanist. The reason of this feminine interest is not far to seek. These intellectual women discerned a new stage in Comte's Positivism.

Comte had advocated the civic use of woman as the balancing corrective of his religious sociology, though he did not suggest her freedom and was even surprisingly drastic in insisting upon her physical subordination. None the less, he had advanced woman's cause. It was left to Mill to call for her liberation. Our fathers were flabbergasted. The Victorians tittered. In those days of uncompromising positionalism, when Harriet Martineau, sitting down on a sofa beside one of the "great," opened conversation, "and now let us have a little talk about space"; and George Eliot could write to my father of "the severe

effort of trying to make certain ideas thoroughly incarnate," the notion of woman having legal rights was preposterous, if not disreputable, and so upon Mill descended the full force of Victorian umbrage which, I regret to say, my father, as a follower of Comte, shared.

Clubland gasped at Mill's audacity. It was too much for those worthies, for the England of Dickens had not appreciably altered, and the idea of giving Mrs. Nickleby, Sarah Gamp or silly Dora a vote, seemed utterly insensate. This is the more curious in view of the signal part played by quite a number of Victorian women who were recognized intellectual powers. They were far more important than one is apt to think to-day, because of the great significance in that time of the drawing-room which was in many respects the " lobby " of Westminster. In these sanctums, the men paid tribute. The Sunday " call " was a ceremony, and an affair of clothes. In a frock coat, a man brought in his silk hat which he deposited under a chair, on the edge of which he discreetly sat and sipped tea. Conversation was learned and " managed," and such was the hostess's art. It was in these Sunday afternoons that reputations were made and lost. Calling demanded a certain " technique." A clever woman could assemble the leading lights and pit them against one another. The Victorian sofa was a significant political instrument. On it, the great questions of the hour were debated, and every subject except sex was permissible. " Society " was a court which functioned with scrupulous observance to form, and I vividly remember the " horror " caused by Turgeniev, then a boisterous, large, bulky man, who sat down with a bump and went right through one of my mother's light chairs—the only person who enjoyed the predicament being the genial Russian novelist who apparently thought it a good joke. The Victorian " lady " (I must use the ancient word) was an unmistakable force. Her salon gave the men their chance to excel in controversy, and its more serious sequence was the dinner-party. I recollect suffering agonies at one of those functions

because the lady on my right naturally talked all the time to Sir William, and she on my left talked all the time to old Mr. ——, who had just written an article on something or other in "The Nineteenth Century," and neither of them had "broken," as was the proper thing to do, at half time and turned to me. But just as the pudding was being cleared away, the swan-necked lady on my right "got left" by Sir William and condescendingly glanced at my plate. Said she: "Sir William is so fascinating. Now, tell me, what College do you intend to patronize?"

On another occasion a distinguished author, who looked very young, was seated next to my grandmother who at last turned to him with the remark: "and what is your average this term?" Youth was not the passport in those days, and this masculinization may account for the fashion of whiskers, since a man had to look virile, and not everyone could display the grave Roman face of the law. A pretty girl, preferably an heiress, sometimes figured at these dinners to draw perhaps a rising barrister or a "younger son," but the credentials were position and merit, and the office of the hostess was to contrast and dramatize her guests, which placed her in a position of considerable power. These women pulled manifold strings. There was no servant problem. Indeed the butler was an integral part of this sovereignty, and he surveyed one's trousers at the door: not to keep a butler was far "worse" than not to be able to afford a car to-day. The social position of the great middle-class woman played a definite part. One dinner led to another, or it—didn't. In these drawing-rooms a man was "tried out." "Tell the young man to call," such a lady would say, "and we will look at him": that was her business. To get on to her dinner list was an asset. All which was possible because "society" then was a comparatively closed ring, familiar, observed and controlled, and there was leisure which the wives of men of position with money made good use of. They instrumented the social dynamics of their men, and I suppose George Eliot in her time was as well known

and perhaps even more sensationally lionized than is to-day the best jazz-dancer in the metropolis.

" I fear you lacked revolutionary ardour," wrote George Eliot to a friend in 1848; such was the spirit of these Victorian Aspasias. They were co-directors of the controlling institutionalism, and in their own citadels they presided at the tea-table with a queenly authority. But man ruled, and so Mill quite failed to energize the wives who did not seriously discuss " rights " until Ruskin had begun to preach his honied wisdom; and even then a woman's movement was merely another subject for discussion, though there was a struggle over the deceased wife's sister, until the lower middle-class woman (Gissing's class) broke through the unctuous despotism of the servants' hall, and corrupted the cook. My mother and Mrs. Humphrey Ward entirely agreed about the incongruity of emancipating that individual, and I feel bound to record that neither our teas nor our dinners have been as good ever since, and I am sure that conversation has gravely deteriorated. These Victorian ladies were the vestals of their time. Their boudoirs were to that age the petticoat " end " of their husband's wine-cellars; and the cheer was generous and agreeable.

That is where Comte perhaps (even as he freed) failed to rise above the spirit of his century, just as he failed to see the evolution of capitalism and the rise of the New World. Man has not become " reasonable," not yet. Comte opined that humanity as it passed out of the stage of awe would learn to control the " mystic " impulse. But to-day, a hundred years later, we may still doubt our capacity in this respect. The question remains: If philosophy cannot be made religious, can religion be made philosophic ?

The Victorians made a strenuous attempt to solve that problem, and intellectually, at least, we may say that they taught mankind to cancel. That is an historical landmark. But the difficulties of subordinating self-love to social sympathy have not diminished in our time, and to-day, a bruised world, rather remote from the scrupulousness of

the Victorians, views the strivings of its fathers with their social and synthetic systems with the usual reaction. Man still cries: of what are we to be the vintagers? Under what law? More pertinent still: moved by what spirit?

Such is the problem, if it be a problem, of Western civilization. Already the detachment between theology and social conduct has gone so far that stout orthodox believers are ready to accept religion as a purely mystical emotion which can be entirely separated from temporal causation, and they motive this queer logic, which in reality is quite heretical and wholly unphilosophical, unless religion is only mystery and philosophy only speculation, by the contention that man is now sufficiently conscious of social morality to proceed on his course, untrammelled by religious jurisdiction. This may be a controversial way out, yet it seems hard to believe that the question of moral jurisdiction is of such slight importance—for man throughout history has followed his spirit, which he is only too apt to confound with his God. It is no longer a question of baptism, so much may be granted; still, it is difficult to discern what forces or inducements in a grossly materialist age will be strong and educative enough (more than that need not be expected) to inspire constructive co-operation, failing which man must fight.

It was to meet this anticipated breakdown that Comte instituted (he never constituted it as dogma in any shape) religious sociology or synthesis of human morality whereby the need of the soul might be given a practical social enthusiasm. And though many may be puzzled by the contention, things have developed very much as he anticipated in fact though not in form, and we have jumped through war and shock almost unperceived over the cauldron of metaphysics into the "positive" or real, organic, useful and relative state, at least, of perception. The diagnosis is clear enough. But the mystic hunger of man has not yet been stilled by reason, even if we may tentatively claim at least to have passed out of what Comte

defined as the theological stage of life into the relative or scientific one. As recently as 1907, the Abbé Loisy suffered "major excommunication" for his notable contributions to the study of the New Testament, and though the Victorians established the reign of tolerance on the principle so often quoted of the Emperor Tiberius, who said that if the gods were insulted they should "see to it themselves," there are plenty of folk left who would like to settle our beliefs for us and clap on the manacles, so persistently and strangely does the religious spirit of man exfoliate into a governance, and thence by easy stages into a tyranny. What the Victorians did for England was to close the era of mystic privilege, thus laying the foundation of the modern spirit. As yet this is vague and unformulated, inchoate and selfish, and for that reason perhaps a little disappointing. We cannot yet judge, for we are too near to the havoc of war. But one can at any rate see the last century as a whole and estimate its significance. If the force of example is still an inspiration, we can surely find that quality in the grim earnestness of those men who sought their religion in the search of truth and of duty.

There would seem no cause for pessimism. In the days of his despondency at the lack of results, and our fathers were perhaps too prone to believe that society could be automatically reconstituted on bases of reason and of synthetic philosophy, Mill sorrowfully wrote: "Many false opinions may be exchanged for true ones, without in the least altering the habit of mind of which false opinions are the result," and he withdrew from such a society of "weak convictions." So every prophet is inclined to think of his own generation, for things only take new forms, and the ideas of one generation are refuted by the next. "This kills that," as Victor Hugo said, and perhaps that is about all we can expect.

My father, at any rate, never had any illusions, least of all about Positivism. He cheerfully held to his beliefs right through the Victorian age, and well on into the

next century, and every year gained in " moral harmony." As for Comte, it may fairly be claimed that he who to-day is not a Socialist must in some form or other, consciously or unconsciously, be a sociologist; and that if this assertion is true, then in this organic, relative and scientific sense religion, too, in the future will be tried, since man, whatever his vagaries and vicissitudes, and however little he may seem to progress, at least does not go back, and now with a free woman at his side is hardly likely to. Thus Comte's " continuity " is a hopeful message, and liberty of thought is our heritage. And that we owe to the Victorians.

Chapter II

THE "AUTOBIOGRAPHY," AND BIOGRAPHICAL

IN his own lifetime, and in his own way, my father set out in chronological order the main facts of his life, which he published in his eightieth year under the title "Autobiographic Memoirs" (2 vols.), thereby, as he told us jocularly at the time and quite characteristically "disposing" of himself. He has given the reason in the "Introductory." It is partly personal, chiefly impersonal. He abominated "revelations" and all the more as his whole life was a religious crusade. Not that he had sought any such distinction which was thrust upon him, but as he happened to live in a period of great intellectual activity, religion became his life's work and responsibility; and being a proud and sensitive man, who had fought a long and continuous uphill fight in which he himself was at times reviled, frequently ridiculed and usually misunderstood, he had a temperamental dislike to the idea of any outsider, however gracious or sympathetic, making a book of him.

"My own plain story," he wrote, "is liable to be misinterpreted even by generous and friendly spirits if it be not freely explained," and by story he implied his struggle on behalf of Positivism which perhaps, on account of its French origin and name conveying a doctrinal authority alien to the English spirit, had been badly mauled during his life-time, and might, he feared, provide tempting material for continuous ill-treatment after his death, so that he did not want a chronicler to explain him.

This sensitiveness, which was not vanity, is intelligible; for in truth an undue portion of his life was perforce spent in seeking to explain and correct the constant misinterpretations of Comte's philosophical sociology indulged in by critics and opponents only too frequently as the result of their indifferent technical knowledge of the French language, comprising men so widely different and themselves so eminent as Ruskin, Mill, Herbert Spencer and Huxley. Ruskin, for example, did not know the meaning of the French word *positive;* Mill interpreted *unité* as unity instead of synthesis; Huxley, with far more justification, accused Comte of repudiating psychology (which was largely true), etc. These theological controversies had absorbed a great deal of my father's time, forcing him into polemic and publicity in which verbal wit and fallacy played a considerable part, particularly from the brilliant and caustic pen of Professor Huxley who had invented Agnosticism; and from Herbert Spencer who had started a religion of his own, also a synthesis of philosophy which differed from Comte's in that it was based on pure intellect and purported to be entirely original; thus somewhat adding to the confusion, and to the choler. And naturally there were others. At least he had reason for caution, the religious man generally has. If people could so easily misunderstand Comte, how much more likely were they to misunderstand his interpreter. Hence he decided at any rate to make sure of the facts and to write his own record in a plain matter-of-fact way, in anticipation; and to these two volumes I would refer all who are interested in the biographical story of his life.

His personal reason is equally clear. His whole life had been lived openly. He was an entirely normal man, meticulously careful both of himself and of his actions, scrupulously exact, fastidiously genuine. He had no secrets, no skeletons, no " past." His life was his pen. Of few men can it more truthfully be said that " he was what he wrote," and probably no man of his time ever wrote more or better with less material ambition or

advantage. Hence, as he often said, " my work and life can provide little public interest. Nothing amusing, piquant or scandalous can be made out of me. I was never a politician or even a *litterateur;* I never smoked a pipe or got drunk. I have nothing to retract or to regret. When I am gone my work alone will be my record, and it may possibly be my justification."

Yet that did not wholly close the subject, and even my father felt that there might eventually be something to say, though he could never bring himself to intimate in what sense and probably hardly suspected it, for he was not given to imaginative flights, and he was not Byronic. He once remarked to me: " You may see things in me and in my life that I cannot see, which may be interesting to others, but whatever you do I trust you may never be tempted to write a filial and full-dress biography." Still my mother sometimes alluded to the matter and from a different aspect: " Your father's life," she would say, " is an example, for in truth he lived only for others." I think this was perfectly true. Few women can have lived with their husbands for so long in such complete spiritual, mental and progressive harmony, and her influence upon him was profound and lasting; the communion rarefied and absorbed her, and in its process so even and unfelt, so permeating that it appeared to " us " inevitable and almost impersonal, it invigorated and absorbed him. It was this quality in his marriage that made my father's life so unaffectedly " simple," one upon which he felt it would be presumptuous for an outsider to intrude, and, moreover, of scant public interest. My father says frankly in his autobiography that he has no " love " interest to record, by which, of course, he implies no romance, such as is generally understood. Yet no man lived more romantically up to his ideas, and I doubt whether any woman lived more rationally up to her romance. Always, all through their married life of forty-six years these two lived as one, both outwardly and inwardly aware and in all respects trustful of one another and of their respective

and, in some ways, quite different aptitudes and proclivities. Sympathy, I suppose, is love in its fullest and absolute form. It coloured and confirmed their two lives. It was the spark out of which, as the autobiography shows, my father kindled and sustained his own progression, in the absence of which his career might have assumed a different complexion, and she might have been a somewhat different woman. One may truly say that their lives were the very imprint of their religion; both, too, were naturally and temperamentally religious.

My father and my mother were piously brought up in the orthodox faith—I use the word "piously" when perhaps I should say "strictly," for in those days religion was a moral discipline which men accepted as the working basis of their theology; in any case, both Frederick and William Harrison were zealous Churchgoers who attended to their children's religious education, and when my father was a boy at school he had leanings towards transubstantiation and a "rational" Catholicism,* which shows his natural bent towards spiritual thought. He subsequently converted his cousin (my mother) and married her, but there are no records of what the respective parents said. On my father's side there seems no reason to believe that there was trouble, but my mother's parents were, I fancy, somewhat perturbed at what in those times would have appeared as a "bold and very grave step." Yet they must soon have become reconciled. I recollect my grandfather, William, perfectly well, and the last words I ever heard him say—it was just before his death—were about religion. He told my mother that he would "die" a Positivist, and he did. He was a wonderfully sweet-tempered old man.

Whether it was due to his rational childhood or not, my father was always singularly balanced and wholly devoid of superstition; and nothing bored him more than obscurantism, or anything in the nature of what we call mysticism. I think this inveterate common sense of his

* I use the word in its Victorian sense when Britons referred to themselves as Protestants by way of contrast.

was congenital. At any rate, he was absolutely unmystic, non-psychic and earthly. Though he was a great friend of Frederick Myers, a ghost to him was an intellectual "offence," something "silly," like any other sort of goblin. This rationalism may have originated from his training, for in one specific sense his early education seems to have been quaintly deficient. He had never heard of fairies till he had children of his own and had to look up the books. I do not feel sure about the subject of fairies in 1830; my father remembers the London of cesspools and gibbets from which pirates and their skeletons hung along the Thames by the Nore, but for some almost predestined reason he had never heard of Cinderella or Grimm until he had children of his own and became initiated in nursery ways and phenomena; nor did he ever read a fairy story, and was presumably never told one, not even the tale of the giant-killer. This may partly explain his temperamental insensibility to speculative theory and his almost bewildering sanity as regards the "unknown," which persisted all through his life. I recollect him sitting one day with questioning consternation, meditating through a performance of "Peter Pan." I think it puzzled him. A revealed fairyland at seventy (or was it eighty ?) probably does present difficulties. It did to him; and I think he was lacking naturally in the sense of "wonder." He could appreciate "Puck" and "Ariel," or perhaps I ought to say the poetry of Puck and Ariel; but I fancy his mind stopped at enchantment. He was not to be cozened by any witch or sprite, but he liked the old Pantalooning of Drury Lane and even the Harlequinade. At any rate, no will-o'-the-wisp ever drew him across the marshes of preternatural speculation. And this habit of elimination, of cancellation, of earthly vision, seemed to be inherent in him. None the less, if, as a boy, he was unskilled in the lore of fairies, he had mastered Greek at twelve and he read Homer for pleasure—at least in his master, Mr. Joseph King, he had a veritable magician of a teacher who seemed able to dispense with

grammar. But to start out life on the Classics is not quite the same thing as a brief communion with fairies, and I doubt whether he ever got over a loss which deprived him of the infinite joy of make-believe. Unfortunately, he never explained how this omission in his early education happened. His father was a merchant in the City who can hardly have harboured any theoretic animus against fairies; but it is quite conceivable that horror at witch hunts had something to do with the father's objection to bring up his son on the mediaeval spirit of cruelty and demonology characteristic of the fairy tale, the magic of which, of course, lies in our half-belief in its truth. Still I never heard of any Victorian boycott of those witching little people: it may have been an oversight. It is conceivable that his child mind did not function mystically and that whatever stories his nurse or parents told him left so little impression upon him that he forgot the tale of Jack and the Beanstalk, yet such would seem hardly likely, since our early years are the impressionable ones. With that exception the atmosphere of his childhood must have been severely practical and usual. He himself was precocious, avid of learning and read extensively. It is obvious that early in boyhood he developed forcible opinions.

His school career was meteoric. He was placed in the sixth at King's College when only twelve, and won the first prize for Latin verse, after which, he declares, he "never learnt much more," and it is clear from the books which he read at that period that he possessed a significantly advanced and inquiring mind. He went up to Oxford when just eighteen, full of enthusiasm; was at first disappointed with his surroundings, but quickly found his level in the society of a brilliant group of young men, many of whom remained his lifelong friends and religious coadjutors.

While still in his teens his whole nature veered naturally towards religion. In his Autobiography, he has explained how instinctively he listened to the new movement at the University, led by Dr. Congreve; how he and his friends

discussed theology; how insensibly and very gradually he formed the opinion that he was not adapted for " Holy Orders," for he had become heterodox and disposed to doubt, and how deeply he felt and cogitated about the problems of life and religion.

Thus he became a free-thinker, though with characteristic carefulness he did not leave his religion, nor was it actually until he was thirty-five that he decided to declare himself a Positivist and abandon the Church. His religious growth was thus extraordinarily deliberate. My father evidently passed through a long period of religious meditation. His exact, causal, reflective mind would not allow him to take any plunge into the dark; indeed he felt he could not abandon the faith in which he was brought up until he was ready to cast his whole soul into some other. If he gradually left Christianity, it was because he derived no spiritual sustenance from it, no vivifying enthusiasm, and enthusiasm was necessary to him both temperamentally and intellectually.

His mother was Irish, and my father, too, always betrayed a streak of Hibernianism. As a young man, he must have been singularly vital and vivid, with his quick impulsive spirit restrained and, no doubt, too, intensified by the deep and thoughtful intelligence which was uppermost. Yet he was never a " prig," not even when he was second in his school at sixteen, and he certainly could never have been a lackadaisical famulus of theology, mooning about college. On the contrary, he was a fighting theologian, described to me once by a contemporary who often used to meet him, as a combative, ardent young man, with black hair and steely eyes, who did not look " like a student." The description must be pretty accurate. No doubt, he was typically Victorian, in the rather hard, narrow, intolerant and self-sufficient sense in which to-day we are apt to classify our forbears, yet he himself evidently kept an open mind, could never have been self-sufficient or doctrinaire and, as a fact, was distinctly inclined to be a rebel.

Intellectually, of course, he would have been so regarded and unquestionably was so viewed at the University from the day that he professed scruples about the infallibility of the orthodox faith; but temperamentally, too, he was inclined to be headstrong, like all men possessed of a burning desire to help and remedy. My father showed that spirit at a very youthful age. His early letters home from Oxford betray the " reformer's " mind. He wants to help others; to remedy grievances; to redress wrongs. He was clearly a doer as well as a thinker, so much so that he was approaching middle life before he realized that his career lay in thought rather than in action.

To a man so deeply religious, so naturally philosophical, so temperamentally impulsive, yet so mentally deliberate, the historical intellectualism of Comte appealed almost irresistibly, for it provided him not only with a faith but with a vocation. Yet my father proceeded with singular caution, no doubt on account of the " subversive " character of the new challenging doctrine which in those days was viewed almost as a public " offence," and of the philosophical character of his own religious emotionalism which would not allow him to act his thoughts precipitately, or to move from any acquired position to another except as the result of prolonged consideration. His " complex," to use a word which he abominated yet which seems applicable, was evidently a strong dualism of character which pulled him in contrary ways, and for a long time his active inclinations predominated. At thirty, he was fairly ready to become a Crusader, and he set to work energetically—no doubt to the alarm of not a few of his friends, for at that period he was more than a " utilitarian " Radical and inclined to be obstreperous, and in those times any serious deflection from type was unpardonable. I expect my father incurred the odium attaching to any young man who repudiates the respectability of his time, and all the more as a young man of means, which must have added to the " offence." A glance at the autobiography reveals the nature of his activities

in this active period of his life, when he espoused causes, and in particular the cause of Labour, which was then in its infancy. This was probably the " unkindest cut of all." To be heterodox was bad enough, but to be a champion of the proletariat in the 'fifties, 'sixties and 'seventies of the last century was akin to " treason," and testified to a high degree of moral courage. Nobody at that time was likely to see any *nexus* between religion and politics, or to understand that such was the motive actuating my father's conduct and that of the little Oxford band of Positivists around him.

So my father stood as a young man, ready to rush in where angels feared to tread, a political lawyer and quasi-Irish at that; and had he not found in religion the spur and solace of exaltation, and shortly afterwards in marriage a fellowship of peace and utility at once soul-satisfying and stimulating, the man who laid the foundation of the Trades-Union law in 1868, who marched up Regent Street at midnight arm-in-arm with a band of republican joiners and masons after a Reform Meeting addressed by John Bright, shouting, " Confound their knavish tricks! ": who passionately championed, befriended and aided the French Communists in 1871, might well have drifted into a fighting public career very different to the repose and solitude into which he retired to find, as sage and writer, his true expression. I think my mother always realized this. She stood in front, she stood behind him. She understood what he himself, so little prone to psychological analysis or to intuitional introspection and even averse to all such method for reasons elaborated by Comte, perhaps never realized, namely, the conflicting sincerity of a nature temperamentally unable to compromise, derivable from his Irish blood which was the key of his personality, and which she with her calm, transfusing character knew so well how to attenuate and to direct.

My father's life can thus be divided into two clearly distinguishable parts, before and after marriage—a break which he recognized himself; indeed, it was not a mere

coincidence that his autobiography appeared in his eightieth year, forty years after his wedding-day. Up to his marriage he was evidently a tempestuous searcher and experimenter, a Christian who could neither believe nor find scope for his own usefulness or happiness for himself; then in marriage he began a new life which initiated a new period in which his energy went into literary work and the whole force of his personality into the living and presentation of his religion.

The first period is one of action. The eager, rather headstrong, impulsive scholar with his rooted individualism and often rebellious inclinations, his superb health which prompted him to action, and pugnacious Anglo-Irish enthusiasms, quick to take up any forlorn cause that engaged his sympathy, wholly unambitious in a worldly sense and already at variance and even at bay with the hard social, political and ecclesiastical prejudices, conventions and insularities of his class and time: who, when still a boy at college, deliberately refused, as a form of mental protest, the reserved seat offered him by his father to witness the funeral of the victor of Waterloo, even before he had ceased to be a Christian: who was the champion of France in days when it was considered unmanly and hardly patriotic even to know a little French: who was the friend of Mazzini and of Louis Blanc, of Ireland, of Italy, of Poland, of Islam, and of the European revolutionaries of 1848: who openly declared himself against the wars and imperialism of his age, and was accused by the Permanent Secretary to the Home Office of writing articles of a "revolutionary character" in the *Beehive:* who made fun of the "jargon," pedantry and procedure of the law while he was himself a barrister and a conveyancer: who was a journalist in France and Italy with an order of expulsion against him, yet declined to accept remuneration for his contributions lest he should be thought biased, and who eventually found himself regarded both as a heretic and a Socialist at a period when it was considered blasphemous to be styled either—such

was the man in mid-life, still uproariously young and energetic, still, so to speak, professionally at a "loose end," a lawyer who was a jurist, a politician who was a historian, and a journalist who was a philosopher, when he entered the meridian of his term and married.

And then the second period—attainment and serenity. He is now sure of himself and of his convictions: he is a Humanist. The revolutionary puts on the toga of philosophy. He is no longer a doubter, a seeker, a probationer. The "revealed" democrat at twenty-four has grown into the staid autocrat at his own breakfast-table, surrounded by a family. He retires from the law for which, professionally, he had little zest, and from all associate political activity on religious grounds, though he subsequently stood in 1886 for London University, moved by the spirit of Home Rule, yet vicariously and solely by way of protest and in proof of his sincerity. Gradually the active participator in public affairs matures into a seer, into a chair of philosophic detachment, even if the old spirit continually breaks out and he cannot resist public controversy. But his thoughts are now wholly concentrated upon his religion; he becomes a teacher and the head of English Positivism.

In this long span of creative work and meditation, he continues to the end. He excels as essayist, and as a prolific writer of books. Men interest him less; he becomes resigned, mellow, Socratic, and in his retreat his innate conservatism returns and becomes more evident in a time of rapid and remarkable change with which even he did not always keep abreast, and was not always in sympathy. If he ceases to be an active reformer, he is always and to his last hour a moral teacher, a critic, an upholder of type and standards. He renounces worldly ambition and all participation in its rewards, happy in the fortitude of his faith. He who saw the first railway train lives to send a wireless across the ocean and to behold a world in chaos, as he had foreseen and predicted, and himself, having attained to an age when neither criticism nor neglect could affect him, at rest and acclaimed.

And even Positivism, his religion, passed across the bar of discord. At the end he could look back upon a purpose fulfilled. When my brother was wounded in the early part of the War and lay dying in a hospital in France, my father, though he was then eighty-four, insisted upon going to his bedside, and sat with him to the last. I met him at the station on his return. His calm was astonishing: " I would not let the chaplain come in and pray," he said. " I told him that if he thought his prayers could help the dead, he could pray outside," and the steel in his eyes shone.

I asked him if he was tired ? " Tired ! " he exclaimed, " why should I be ? I had quite a snooze in the train." And as we drove to the station, for he went straight back to Bath, he talked composedly about the War and its deeper historical meaning. " It is the end of Bismarck and his handiwork," he said, " and let us hope of all imperialism."

I could not help smiling, for my father's hatred of Bismarck largely dated from the May laws against Rome, which, in sharp distinction to (Lord) Morley, he had at the time passionately denounced as contrary to all " Christian doctrines." If my father was no pacifist, he was a great " Christian."

For much of his strength and happiness in this latter period my mother was, I think, unusually responsible, for truly she was the stay of his affairs. Had she been materially ambitious or encouraged him to take an active part in life, he might, with his rather exuberant temperament, quite conceivably have done so, for he was impetuous and at the same time ingenuous, and susceptible to flattery. But in her he found the exact human expression of the reason and concord voiced in the religion he had so passionately espoused, which fitted the quality and quantity of his being. Their very marriage was a consecration of sympathy. In moulding her, he fashioned himself, and their two egoisms became as one. She literally seemed his second self, partly, no doubt, as the result of

his own personality, creed and theory, yet chiefly through natural affinity and through sheer combination.

In some ways, of course, this fusion of mind and interest cramped him, drawing him away from the world, fostering a natural sensibility and exclusiveness and throwing him upon his own resources. The contemplative life was not natural in one so hardy, so combative and self-assertive. Yet, perhaps, it was as well so. He was not adapted for a political career, he was far too individualistic, obstinate, vigorous and truth-seeking to find congenial occupation in the inevitable evasiveness and Party mechanism of Parliament for which surely his inborn aversion to any kind of regimental discipline unsuited him; for my father was in daily intercourse a quick-tempered man and intolerant, and nothing annoyed him more than the prevaricating dilatoriness of the political mind.

In this he was the exact opposite of his great friend, Lord Morley, whom he would sometimes lecture like a schoolboy. I remember my father grabbing Lord Morley by the sleeve in the Athenæum Club and telling him that he " ought " and " must " do it, or resign. It was just before the War, when Ireland was again the pressing question. Lord Morley started back at the words.

" Ought and must," he said, in his quiet, courteous yet somewhat supercilious voice. " There are no such words in politics, Fred. Haven't you yet learnt that ? " And he turned round to me. " You really must educate your father," he continued, " in the rudiments of our poor misunderstood craft." My father gasped, for he was annoyed, and so, I fancy, was Lord Morley.

" Do you mean to say . . . ? " my father began.

But Lord Morley interrupted him. " We can't go on in that way, or we should all have our throats cut."

I recall the conversation well, which interested me as so typical of the two men—of my father, so active in his philosophy, of the other, so philosophic in his activity. Nor did I ever see Lord Morley again, for shortly after-

wards he was to resign, though for a very different reason, and to disappear for ever from public life.

To most men, marriage is a worldly event attaching them to, rather than detaching them from, the material life, but in my father's case it was the exact opposite. I do not suggest that my mother motived his retirement or that she, in any way, dissuaded him from the free exercise of worldly activities. The reason is to be found in the religion of Humanity, nor can there be any doubt but that in her, and in the idea of the family, my father sensed the means of self-realization in accordance with the principles of his religion, to which end my mother lent the full weight of her influence. My father's ideals were hardly compatible with what is called " success," especially in those closer, more personally observed and familiar days; and as his career at the Bar had practically come to a forcible end, he saw in marriage and retirement the moral equipment which would enable him to act his thoughts in a manner more useful and seemly than through participation in the scramble of public life. My mother came to him when still quite a girl and he already a full man, precisely at a time in his unfolding and maturity when the whole force of his mind was ablaze with a religious fervour which, he perceived, shut him out from contact with the material things of this world. The decision to devote his life to a religion which was not only new and foreign, but so new and so foreign that it was condemned even by the great literary lights of the time as " heretic," was thus a marriage contract of moral sympathy. But for her, he might not have retired from the hurly-burly of active life either so fully or so contentedly. It so happened that she filled the open spaces of his soul just when he needed it, just when sympathy was the essential lacking in his life, and it procured for him a happiness that never left him.

Sometimes my mother would allude to that when the matter of a " life " came up. " There is nothing to add," my father would say. " My life has been a perfect harmony." Then the Italian eyes of my mother would light

up and she would smile. Once she said to me, not long before her death: " There is, of course, something else, but don't write it unless you feel it."

It is not for me to attempt anything in the nature of a formal biography.

If I have recorded these impressions, while the memory of him is still young and before mine is too old, it is merely to fill in and preserve a portrait which, as Coleridge said, should be the abstract of the personal, not a " likeness for actual comparison, but a recollection."

Chapter III

THROUGH INFANT EYES

I HAVE often tried to recall the first conscious sight of my father, which must, I fancy, have been significant. Alas! in vain. The paternal memory is a sad truant, and I have found a similar embarrassment on the part of others who have had notable fathers, and who likewise have admitted, when they "came to think of it," a haze in connection with that side of the family, which biographically ought to stand out with a certain valiancy. In truth, I suspect that fathers are in the nature of an acquired taste to the vast majority of infants looking out upon life from the cradle; and probably to most of us the father is almost the last of the early influences that we can record faithfully, ranking in the gallery of evocable first impressions far behind the vista of soft, cool faces that seemed then, and still seem to belong to us and to take shape automatically, and even they outdistanced by earlier recollections of inanimate bodies and things and wholly trivial incidents.

Perhaps that is not the case with sons of very young fathers, when the relation is nearer and father and son are more of the same age. I can only guess. At any rate, I have no revelation to record. I can recall my mother with undimmed clearness, bending over my cot when I was about three and cooing a little song. She wore a Walter Crane peacock-green frock with a broad lace collar and trimmings and gold braid in Grecian fashion across her hair, which was raven black. I liked the green

and I liked the black of her. And I can remember her voice, gentle and musical, and her hands which were white and cool and soft, with rings on them which I soon learnt to watch suspiciously because sometimes they hurt. She takes a very early place in my mind. I did not, of course, know that she was my mother, but quite soon I perceived that she had rights on the floor where I resided, and as she moved about in a calm, stately, possessive manner, in robes which, at a very early stage in my existence, caught and excited my attention, gave orders, and " looked " as if she ought to have rights, I accepted her naturally as the creature of a peculiar world who, though she did not belong to my sphere, like nurse, or like " Rose " who slept with us, yet possessed a communicable authority and knew more about me than I knew about her.

I have no doubts about her at all, because of the bright colours she wore—and colour is my first memorizable sensation—and her long earrings which bobbed and glittered, and her voice. It is sight at that age that counts, and to me she was a vision, and I was even slightly afraid of her, so quiet and toneful did she appear in comparison with the two guardians of the nursery whom I was conscious of earlier in life as standing on a more familiar and lower plane. These were the nurse with a long, rather melancholy face, who subsequently " went over " to Rome and entered a convent, and she, of course, presided and distributed our fare, which explains my interest in her. She was a peaceful creature, who spoke little, but what she said mattered; unlike Rose, the help, who seemed to be present chiefly to smile and scuttle about, and her, I think, I can recall still earlier. Yet even before Rose I can visualize places. I can recollect yelling as a baby of three at Fontainebleau when I was " saved " by goat's milk. I can remember an absurd dirty rag-doll called " Goosey-bolly " that I used to hug and chew myself to sleep upon in bed, and sundry other disturbing incidents. My father remains a blank for quite a long time.

My father was a busy man in those days, still vigorously in public life, and, of course, his home was divided into the three parts usual in a Victorian household, forming three perfectly distinctive aggregations which were always classified by " us," when we were old enough to talk and form opinions, as " upstairs," or the " top," " our " part and " theirs." Our sympathies as the intermediate floor, in between authority and service, were rather with the upstairs contingent than with the lower, as was entirely fitting in the sons of a hot Radical, because the upstairs people lived and moved democratically with us on equal terms, whereas the downstairs people, for all their fine clothes and bearing, did not dwell on our floor, and were not on equal terms, and when I first became conscious of them, appeared to me somewhat in the light of invaders, not only of our precincts, but of our very persons. These things tell in infancy, which is not so foolish as some folk imagine. Even my mother fell into that category. She seemed to *appear* rather than to *be*, like nurse or Rose or " Goosey-bolly," and the impression I had of her was that of any familiar person who comes through a door at intervals and goes out again; which is a different thing giving a different feeling—and it is feeling or sensation which impresses first—to the possessive inevitableness shared by every child towards the individual who feeds and lives with it, no matter how frequently that person may go in and out of, or slam, the nursery door.

I knew that the slightest scream on my part would bring the tall, pensive, melancholy lady scurrying back, and that it was my undisputed privilege to scream at any moment of the day or night. A child thinks rationally. If it discovers that the beautifully-gowned, seraphic and exquisite being who " looks in " and kisses it is not at all times there, summonable on every occasion to become always, immediately and indefatigably serviceable, surprise and doubt set in, leading to a carefully drawn-out distinction which counts. Some Victorian children, of course, hardly ever knew their parents until they went

to school, when they again lost them. I can remember a great Victorian who had eleven children, who would often call out at luncheon: " Hi ! You there, George or Dick, or whatever your name is, don't sit on the salt ! " The poor man could not recollect the names of his progeny, and it was hardly to be expected that he should, considering the circumstances in which he lived in constant migration from his town house to one of his three other mansions in different parts of the country, and the vast stable that he kept, the Greek name of every horse of which he knew by heart.

My father did not keep a stud, and his family in the days when I dimly assumed consciousness was small; still he was an " intruder " in our nursery domain, and I fancy I must have been quite four before I can honestly say that I can place him, though I was conscious of him considerably earlier. My earliest impression of him is his voice.

This at the time appealed to me owing to its deep, resonant cheerfulness. It would cause me to pause when I heard it, and set up a strain of emotions which gradually, yet only gradually, I reckoned to be pleasant, perhaps because it acted as a kind of subconscious shock, or because in some insidious way it sounded so unmistakably different from the gentle tones to which I was accustomed, and struck a dissonance.

After many attempts to recover my first conscious impressions, I have come to the conclusion that long before I can remember to have seen my parents I knew them by sound and colour: my mother a long way first by virtue of her gowns, her braided black hair and her large, light, Sicilian eyes which had a far-away look in them: my father by reason of his sonorous voice which, I soon noticed, affected even the austere melancholy of my nurse, who had religious leanings. At first I imagine I must have been frightened at the noise emitted by my father. Yet not for long, for I can distinctly recall trying a smile upon him, when suddenly his face assumed a

form which I had not seen before, and I reckon he dated in my mind from that moment.

Needless to say he wore the regulation period whiskers which made his exceptionally big head and broad, square red face appear enormous. I was in bed. That was the first occasion on which I really saw him, and I gazed at him in wonderment. His hair was very black and his whiskers stood out with a threatening combativeness. The eyes were bright and hard and though not deep-set seemed to see out of strange depths. He inspired me with wholesome awe. I was not expecting such a sight, and I turned away. Then, I remember, he picked me up, and to my consternation, placed my face against his cheek, murmuring loud noises which I felt were intended to soothe me. It was my first conscious crisis. But interest in the prickling hair on his face probably saved the situation, and I perceived that there was no reason to cry for help. He looked at me for a long time and I looked at him. When he put me back in bed again I was conscious of a plunge into a new and speculative world. I suppose I was four at the time; when my father lived at Southwick Place.

A boy's haziness about the personality, and, of course, the purport, of his male parent is, perhaps, natural, and certainly must have been the rule rather than the exception under the Victorian usage, which so subdivided and inevitably estranged the family. Admittedly, it made the Empire, which is a large point in its favour. I have heard it said that this practice led to the Public Schools system, which is a more debatable advantage, and probably was the result, though it may equally well have been the cause, of the big family which, in our puritanical island, we practised with such strict catholicity and but for which the nation might never have had Nelson who, along with so many other great men, was the last of a whole bunch of children. In these days the tendency is to reverse the position of the male parent, and to-day it is no uncommon sight to see a young father nursing a child on his lap with quite a technique in manipulating the bottle. I am sure

my father never attempted such a thing or some of us—some of his children—would have remembered it. But we none of us can recall any such event, and I take it for granted that no self-respecting father in those stern and decorous days in the 'seventies, when the views of John Stuart Mill on women were, for all practical purposes, regarded as the freakish, academic and intellectual exercise of a visionary, and the creaming strength of Mr. Ruskin's prose was as far ahead of Socialism or of any organized proletarian thought in the country as to be elegantly toyed with as the "new æstheticism," would have demeaned himself so irretrievably in the eyes of his household as to venture to intrude upon the sacred rights of his womenfolk and nurse the baby.

Not for one moment do I suppose that I was ever nursed or fed by my father, though I should like to think so, for there is much intimate joy and comfort in the beginnings of one's own. It would seem natural that a man who would understand himself should seek to understand his issue; hence of the two ways, the Victorian which left the children to the nursery, and the other, or modern, which socializes the nursery, so to speak, I cannot but think that the modern is preferable; first, because it establishes an intimacy unattainable by the old Victorian method; secondly, because it provides so admirable a lesson in things appertaining to women and their environment to the male, who thus sucks knowledge from his own child. In matters Victorian we are to-day agreeably disposed to reconsider our recent devastating judgments now that the first flush of the new freedom has subsided, but I trust we may not return to the old custom which possibly gave rise to the adage that "'Tis a wise son who knows his own father." Certainly as an infant I did not know mine. I only sensed him. For a long while he was a stranger, a nice and a welcome one, yet a visitor, and for many years I preferred "mine own," or those whom instinctively I felt to be an indissociable part of my rights and of my home.

A detachable, apparitional, non-serviceable parent is never quite the same as one with whom you have grown up side by side, whose voice sounds familiar not peculiar, whose face seems inevitable rather than attractive, whose attentions are unasked and not called for. That is the difference. I—it is unfortunate that my ego should have to intervene so often in a work in which I am merely the fret of the instrument I would play upon, but I do not see how it can be helped, and in any case it is purely connective and interpretative—I find I am unable to recall anything personal about my father beyond the sheer presence of him, of which I preserve a quite distinct and vivid impression.

To me, he was an emanation which periodically took shape, as a kind of ceremonial, and in this respect I distinguished him from my mother. My mother was never that. She was decidedly nearer to my earth. I saw much more of her and she seemed more in tune with the regular shapes about me. Yet here again I am astonished at the dimness of my memory, when I think how easily I can recall incidents and perplexing happenings and manifold other strange and indelible impressions, for instance, that of gazing at my younger brother soon after he was born, with his little, dark, amusing eyes and black hair sprouting on his head. Of my father I can only think atmospherically. I cannot truthfully say he began at such a date, and continued. I can only re-establish him fitfully. He seemed to me a pretty wonderful being, a great jovial fellow who, though he looked fairly dangerous, was yet entirely harmless and even a little awkward in " our " company. I am certain about that peculiarity because it attracted me, and a child is a demon at spotting a weakness. This large, fiercely-whiskered man with his massive head and boisterous voice, his keen, steady eagle-eyes and black hair brushed scimitar-fashion in above the ears, had, I early came to realize, certain rights in the nursery which even extended to me. It was not that he asserted them. He did not so far as I was concerned. Nevertheless, he

came and went, like a conqueror, and I became conscious that between him and myself there lay some causal connection which might, as I grew up, lead to difficulties. When he spoke, people moved. The nurses would stand while he was in the room. He exuded an atmosphere unlike that of my mother, which gave rise to reflective sensations—probably my initial efforts at differentiation.

With my mother I always felt it was " all right," but with my father I was not so sure. He belonged to the dimensions of the lower floor which I had not yet explored. That he belonged to the house and in a kind of way to the nursery, I could appreciate. The manner in which he opened the door showed that. Yet he was not an intimate and hardly as much as familiar. I liked him because he looked so big, so black, so robust, so cheerful, and I felt that anyone like that must have his uses. But what they were I could not imagine. He was not the doctor, I knew, for the doctor always tapped my nose with a spoon, for which affront I hated him ever afterwards. At the same time he was not " one of us." He was more like the figure in our Jack-in-the-Box than any other that I could think of, and he became a source of continual amusement, tempered with perhaps a streak of awe, much as, later on, I came to regard my uncles. I think his " name " had a good deal to do with this.

I never can recollect calling my father by any of the endearing names now generally in vogue, nor did I ever address my mother otherwise than in that rather severe term. The word " daddy " was unknown in our family, and for the same reason, " mummy " also was never used. I am inclined to think now that this made a considerable difference. My father had views on this subject, which naturally we at the time knew nothing about, yet I can well recall my surprise, when considerably later in life I first heard a boy address his father across the table as " Dad," so familiar, discourteous and disrespectful did the diminutive seem to me. A boy who has never used the word " Dad " and never felt that he had a right to, as

becomes one link in the chain with another, misses something which assuredly sticks. In the not-understood and often strained relationship between son and father an endearment is like a ray of sunshine, which, if it does nothing else, at least preserves the comparative sense which is so significant in early life, and even educationally is so enlightening. We certainly did not have any comparative sense towards our father. He was " father " and was never thought of or spoken to in any other way.

I believe I never understood exactly what this meant until just after I had left school when I overheard a conversation in a railway-carriage between two men, who looked absurdly alike, both of whom were dressed in breeches and gaiters, and were wholly absorbed in a conversation about horses. But it was not the turf that interested me, though their keenness and jocular familiarity were fascinating. My heart thumped as I heard the younger man say, " You know, dad, old cock, you are a corker." For the remainder of the journey I could think of nothing else. I had known fathers who whipped their sons as a regular duty (or pastime ?) during the holidays, and I had seen French fathers weep over and kiss their sons in the street, and was not impressed; but these horsey gentry were new, for I had no idea that such things were done or could be done. What astonished me most of all was that the older man actually looked pleased, as if he was rather proud of his offspring ! It was that I found so extraordinary. Neither the " blubberatious " kind, nor the whipping kind of a father seemed attractive in comparison with mine, yet I confess I thought this racy ease of the horsey pair enviable. I had always understood that it was familiar, not to say rude, to adopt a form of address which smacked of lack of respect, and it had never occurred to me even to attempt such a thing.

No doubt it is largely a matter of degree. In those days the stock attitude was respect. We thought in terms of *correct*, *genteel*, *estimable* and such like, and the code of behaviour was inexorable. " Here stands a post. Who put

it there ? " etc. There was no mistaking the code which was, despite its harshness and its insular inelasticity, a fine one which led to splendid results, at which to-day we are apt to look back with a sneaking admiration. The problem of father and son seems to depend very largely upon first beginnings in which, as is natural and indeed inevitable, the mode of address or of attack assumes an all-important part. Between the appellative " Father " and " Dad," or " Pa," or " Papa," there is an uncrossable gulf which every boy understands because the entire question is one of relativity, according to which the position of the parent is defined. This, no doubt, was its reason; the parent in those days was defined. It comes down to the issue of simplicity.

That is what I, as a child, staring and marvelling at the big man who laughed so loudly and came from downstairs, sensed in my father and, perhaps, missed, just as in his childhood he missed fairies. I have subsequently often wondered how I contrived to get over the spluttering infant stage when language presents such insuperable difficulties, and " Dad," as a start, offers so sweet and obvious a solution both to the lips and to the heart. Yet I doubt if I ever did cry " Dad "; certainly I never did after dawning consciousness, indeed, my formality in this respect was so strict and sustained that when, long afterwards, in a letter from school, as a " try-on," I addressed my father as " Dear Pater noster," he wrote back a letter of stricture, saying that " so frivolous and inept a joke " was a grievous sign of " moral disrespect," which he hoped I would " take pains to rectify." And now that I am referring to this matter I may mention another peculiarity, only revealed to me quite late in life (I am a Victorian myself) by a lady who, having seen a letter of mine signed with my name in full, inquired whether I always so signed my letters. I told her that I did and always had done since a bold attempt made once as a boy of fifteen when I had signed my Christian name only, which drew forth a missive of reproach intimating that I was falling into

" schoolboy habits of laxity which would infallibly bring me to the workhouse." The workhouse mattered in those days, like the gibbet in the age before. As a fact, it was only in comparatively recent years that I dropped my surname in my letters to him, when he, too, grew lax and signed " Pater."

Moral codes, of course, are affairs of latitude and time. In his day, sons were units of pedigree rather than bone of bone, and I have often heard my father describe the scene at dinner when, as a lad in the top form of his school, he was permitted to " come in " and sit down silently with his brothers at table " to be seen and not heard." We had nothing of this " good old " gentility, nor can I recall any of the rigid formalities customary in Victorian homes, but we " knew our place," as the servants said, and the relationship, though perfectly simple, was distinctive and grew in complication as the difference between " us " and " him " became more accentuated, and " rights " began to clash with established and asserted authority. On the whole, we were fairly well off as regards formalities. My father disapproved of the habit, at that time not uncommon, of saying " Sir " to a parent. We escaped all that. I fancy my father disliked the word " daddy," which he regarded as effeminate.

Looking back, I can see an explanation for that indefinable yet felt difficulty—though " difficulty " is not the word, so slight was the sensation that I always experienced in talking to him, or perhaps I ought to say that he seemed to experience in talking to me—which may be ascribed to the lack of simplicity in the early beginnings when, in the absence of a comparative measurement only assessable through speech, I was compelled to look austerely up while he was compelled to look austerely down, thus establishing a hiatus that, even in a life-time, was never wholly removed. The fragile, tender barrier would have been down in a flash had I ever been able to address him familiarly, for I often

onged to and I think he, too, felt subsequently in much the same way. After all, what measurement has a child other than that of its own limitations ? If it finds that its father is wholly near and approachable, it grows up, perforce, in an intimacy unattainable by any other method, and speech is surely the only medium available, since always it is the " little things " that count. The moment a child has to think, the inestimable gift of simplicity vanishes, and on both sides the relationship is apt to become one of procedure instead of harmony, and something that cannot be defined and can never be regained is lost for good.

This is where mothers score so easily and triumphantly over the male parent. They are of the child, and they can do what they please with it, and that, no doubt, is the reason of the spoilt boy and why educationists want the boy young. I have sometimes wondered how the relationship would have fared had my mother, as some mothers do, absorbed and detached me, and I had grown up differentiating, as children will where one parent is closer than the other. But, fortunately for us, my mother was not like that. She was splendidly relative. She did not doll us, nor can I remember ever having differentiated or acted towards her otherwise than I would have acted towards my father. Her position was to me precisely that of my father's, perhaps even more so as I grew older. I never felt that there was a dual authority or appeal; the authority and the appeal were one, and I never dreamed of playing one off against the other and snatching a verdict, so personified and calculable was the bond that united them and the line that divided " us " from them. This cleft undoubtedly led to a certain want of sympathy on my part, whereby I was distinctly the loser.

My mother would sometimes refer to this matter. Many, many years later she said she thought on the whole that a " respectful " nursery was perhaps a mistake, chilling rather than binding. Between a father and son there ought to be a *via sacra* which was, perhaps, only

possible when quite early in life the speech which divided the child from the parent was in its early beginnings a common one, bringing the father down to the child, rather than lifting the child up to the father. And she said she had observed certain difficulties as time went on, which obstructed natural intercourse, and if she had to begin over again she would certainly encourage the full use of the " silly " little words and cries that are of the essence of the home. I do not suppose that I felt that at the time. Still, as I have said, my father's presence was a ceremonial. He stood, as it were, on a pedestal and was, as such, incommunicable. Things became different when he appeared, and remained so for many years. He was like a magnificent reality who somehow was an abstraction. I never felt I could " get through," so to speak, and no doubt it is due to that feeling that I find the nursery recollections of my father somewhat broken and hazy.

Beginnings are proverbially difficult, and the fact is that words are just as significant to an infant as they are to the adult. The Victorian method has probably gone for good. Respect was the injunction of the family; the sons kept their distance and looked up. I do not mean that fathers necessarily looked down. Still, that was the feeling, and though some people may be disposed to say " and a good thing, too," I submit that much of the ugliness, cold cruelty and bleak insularity of that period derived from the attitude of the father to his son, which was, in some not very clear sense, associated with the word, " Spartan."

All who have lived in France must have observed the intimacy between the parents and their children. Yet the reason is perfectly simple; it flows automatically out of the common family vocabularly summed up in every child's reading-book in France as " *Papa, Mamma et Bébé.*" One finds this intimacy to-day almost everywhere —for American conditions perhaps the order should be reversed, when the equation would be " Mummy, Toady and Pop." Among the poor, the relationship seems to

present no difficulties, probably because all in that class are too near the earth, too utterly subject to their conditions. Anyway, the Victorians missed that much of life's little wonders. There was no real intimacy between a father and his son, and by that I mean friendship. Few Victorian boys, for instance, would approach their male parent on a " thorny point " for advice. I have known many boys of that time who never could speak to their fathers at all, far less consult them. One simply did not consult one's father. It was " not done." I doubt if boys then regarded their fathers as friends. I don't think that was the idea, which is foreign in origin and had not then permeated through the thick integument of insular " superiority " that lay like a mist over Britain as the result of our defeat of France; which is, of course, chiefly the explanation of so much of the smugness and self-sufficient intolerance of the Victorians, as also of that pride and coldness that made them so unintelligible and so different to other peoples. No, the Victorian youth did not visualize his father as a being in whom he could confide and exchange mutual confidences, and because of the distance between them there was no real intimacy, and I suppose the last person a boy would have chosen to make a confession to was his father.

The common term for a father among boys was " the Governor," diminutive " Guv'ner," and it may still be so, for all I know. But in our case that was not the case. I cannot recall that we any of us ever spoke of him among ourselves by a nickname, which seems to me, considering that my father had four sons, a pretty good tribute to his personality. The curious part of it is that I have no recollection of any instruction on this matter, though I can remember my mother referring to the " dignity " of the words " father " and " mother," and the moral importance of tone in the family. These things sank deeply in. Even at school I could never ask another boy where " his guv'ner " was—it seemed so familiar and common. Our parents had no labels, yet in one of the closest intimacies

I have ever known between a parent and his son, the father generally addressed his boy as "young shaver" and the boy responded with "old bird," or some such loose, jocular, irreverent qualification.

It is, no doubt, a difficult thing to be a wise father; it is also difficult to be a wise son. I am all for the friendship relation now, even if it may turn out a less dignified association later on in life, which I rather suspect is the case, for form, even as between a father and son, is essential. And I think the test is enjoyment. If a child has joy of his parents, as would appear entirely natural and even necessary, all is well; but if a boy cannot enjoy his father, then the relationship between them is not one of intimacy; it is Victorian, and as the child grows older real friendship between them will become well-nigh impossible.

Our bewildering hypocrisy, which so puzzles foreigners, is reflected in this artificial parental code, hence the extraordinary silence that characterized the Victorian family. A father could not speak to his son about the snares and pitfalls of life. Sternly and rather pathetically, he would deliver himself on rare occasions of certain stock homilies mainly composed of negatives, until the hapless listener wondered whether there existed an affirmative in the language. Moral teaching in those days simply did not exist except by rote and repetition. There were no explanations. Never was the why of a matter treated. There was no scientific (as we would say to-day) teaching on subjects of vast and crucial social importance. Only "don't" was heard.

How could a father who had never been intimate with his son converse with him familiarly? Of course he couldn't, and, per contra, neither could the boy. Moreover, the father stood on a supposition of perfection which made it difficult for him to "come down" to his son's level. Life was subdivided into things which belonged to the domain of the mother, and things which belonged to the father. Thus the wine-cellar, school, authority, punishment, sex and the holidays were the father's sphere of

control; the mother had charge of infancy and the cupboard, and later of clothes, Christmas, doctors, sickness and adversity. The sort of feeling engendered in the mind of an inquiring youngster by these rigid tabulations and zones of interest was that he ought to be "jolly glad he had a father," as if he had been responsible for his own happening. It makes all the difference if that idea is reversed and the parent feels "jolly glad" that he has a son. These shades of feeling make themselves felt imperceptibly, yet very significantly. "What! tell the Guv'?" the Victorian boy would exclaim, petrified at the thought of confessing some peccadillo. He could not see his way to bearding his father in the library: "I say, Dad, I want your advice," in the modern way which, I think, pays better. The one is formalism, the other reflects intimacy. Under the former, a father could not talk to his son as a friend; under the latter, a son cannot think of his father other than as a friend.

At the same time, the Victorian home mattered in a way perhaps lacking in the modern one; it "clicked." The old term of address, "Master," was no mere figure of speech, it was based on the primeval principle of a headman who spoke with authority, and though, no doubt, this arrogation of mastery led to abuse and servility, and to not a little absurdity, it did keep things in their places in a way that to-day is far from being so apparent. Our quite specifically English sex-war was the eventual outcome of this imposition. The question of the family is involved. If the Victorian wife was "under" her husband, she was not really unhappy because of that; she eventually broke out because she had no law and no rights, i.e. she had no opportunities. And that was true; the man held all the cards. The Victorian had a great time of it. He was supreme in his own "castle," and labour was dirt cheap. After all, Wellington had defeated Napoleon. One must not forget that when one criticizes the Victorian to-day. He felt that the world owed him tribute, with his wife and his sons, and he enforced it.

The " great " middle-class was the result. One has but to re-read Dickens to form an estimate of the prejudice, ugliness and harshness of that age.

" We " stood in between the Victorian and the intimate way. My father at that time held strong views about the family in connection with Positivism, which naturally I knew nothing about, and they differed materially from the prevailing notions of correct deportment; indeed, looking back, I can see now that my father was perhaps too solicitous of our welfare, too parentally careful, perhaps even too fond of us. His visits at regular times were to me a formality which I enjoyed. I don't think I shouted and leapt towards him when he came, but he used often to shout at me. I cannot recall feeling towards him at that period quite in the way that I felt towards the big bear rug upon which one could roll and romp, though probably that was my fault. Certainly my father was not a true Victorian in his home; he was a Positivist Victorian. I seemed to feel that he wanted quite particularly to be near to us, and I think he was. One appreciated the dividing line, but there was no barrier and never any severity. Very early in life I grasped that my father was not only head of the family, but " head " of something outside as well. I cannot recall how that occurred, but I did come to regard him long before I understood the meaning of religion as in some uncertified sense a " holy " man.

It must not be supposed that my father was the preoccupied type of man who had no time for his children. Quite the contrary; he was excessively apparent and even inclined to be rampageous. He must have " mugged " up his stories, for he certainly told us some, though not fairy stories, when, as occasionally happened, I would climb up into the big bed downstairs before breakfast, and I felt that anarchy had won. That was the moment for transfiguration and all barriers came down. There we " found him out." On such occasions he was boyish and gaily unparental, except when we wouldn't " leave off," which generally was the case. Anyhow, there, in

bed, I have lasting recollections of his breeziness, his jollity, his pantomimic ebullition which was startling, and of my mother, who often appeared astonished at the capers and antics of the philosopher at her side; and I can remember how "furry" and sparkling he was and how he would chase us upstairs, pretending to be furiously annoyed, roaring like a bear, and he roared as well as his great friend, Pember.

His and my favourite story was the " Three Bears," which has the signal merit of providing a curtain and, with us, generally ended in a commotion. His voice was the thing and his imitation of the Big Bear terrific. That part of him was gloriously successful. In bed, he seemed to relax. He got very near to our divinity at such moments. I liked him best when he roared, and nothing pleased me more than a visit to the dressing-room where, as he dressed, he was wont to troll out staves of ballad or song in a deep bass voice. I think he only had two tunes, but that made it better, and the " Bay of Biscay—o " lent itself to virtuosity. One got on terms with him then. As long as he was undressed or dressing, he seemed to be wholly within my reach. I felt I could get level with him in his shirt-sleeves.

I used to love to creep down and pinch his toes while he was shaving, at which he would roar, for he couldn't stand being tickled. On such occasions he was just what a child likes—he made absurd and outrageous sounds. Indeed, when I come to think of it, he was a boisterous parent, not in the least grave, or severe, or frightening. He was really a very jolly person, when one could get at him. There is a story handed down about him of that time how one Sunday, when he and my mother were going out to pay a call, he leapt down the whole flight of stairs, landing his silk hat into the dining-room, for which " indecorous " feat he was duly reprimanded by my mother, who was then an ardent Ruskinite. I can well believe it. There was nothing priggish about my father. He enjoyed high spirits and gave free vent to them. He

was in those days almost a tomboy and hated all pose and affectation. I have been told that he even rather shocked my mother by his rowdy inclinations which, of course, was the side of him I liked best.

I became curiously fond of my father, if not with glee or passion; there was a quality about him that shed confidence. I felt he was solidly real and reliable, and at length his remoteness, too, seemed natural. I remember him on one occasion when I was ill in bed with boils, sitting beside me holding my hand, and how proud I felt of the distinction thus bestowed upon me. He seemed to be hardly conscious of my existence, but every fibre of my being reeled towards him, for somehow it seemed to me that he was sitting there so silent and thoughtful as if to show me that he was far more to me than perhaps I had imagined, and his very silence was significant and communicating and unusual. That must have been the first time that I was conscious of real love. I knew then that we meant something definite to one another. I thought him wonderful. I had got beyond the mere fact of presence. Many years after I was told that I was very ill at the time (1879) and that he was anxious.

Curiously enough my mother begins to fade in my memory as my father becomes more distinctive, and there seems a gap in my infant recollections that I am unable to fill. I can see her now in our nursery with a pointed white-laced cap upon her head, diaphanously moving about the room, carrying a white heap in her arms to which she crooned. I can recall vividly the sensation of joy which I always experienced when her cool white hand was laid on my forehead, but I do not imagine we romped together as I did with Rose, who would often crawl on her knees round the room while I sat astride her back, nor were we intimate in the way that children now are with their mothers. She, too, inspired respect. She was always rather like the beautiful lady in the story, and I adored stories, which she read exquisitely. I used to watch her lips and wonder how she did it, in such a soft, limpid

stream did the words flow out. No one else could read as she did, and I must have lain for hours at that time watching and listening.

There seems to be a blank in my memory after my first vivid impressions. Other children appeared. The sequence of memory is arrested. I still seem to hear the roar of the " Three Bears " followed by frantic escapes up the nursery staircase, and then the delights of a piece of bacon " on toast " at breakfast, and my unforgettable amazement at the sight of my father consuming two boiled eggs in two spoonfuls apiece after a plateful of sausages and bacon. Then there were sardines which, for some reason or other, I still associate with my father's propensity for eating them whole—tail, bones and all. I wear knickerbockers. The nursery becomes a schoolroom. The nurse is now otherwise engaged. My father seems to dwell more than ever downstairs. His appetite is wholly extraordinary. "We" gather that Spencer is "at it" again. I sense that my father has enemies. I discover a new meaning in him. I suspect that he requires "our" help.

Chapter IV

AGNOSTIC FEATHERS

WHEN I again emerge and see my father, see him with a budding sense of proportion and perspicuity, I am frocked in a gaberdine; my hair is cut long, like Dr. Johnson's, or, as we should now style it, " bobbed," and I gaze at my older brother, who is similarly attired, with swelling consternation. We have reached a sartorial stage. The why and wherefore of this costume phase I naturally then did not understand, or I might have borne my favours with better grace. I suppose it was the Victorian apogee, when well-bred people spoke of a thing as " quite too-too," just before or about the time that Gilbert and Sullivan took London by storm with " Patience " in the early 'eighties; anyhow, every incident of that æsthetic experimental period clings to my memory, which perhaps explains, if it does not justify, the behaviour of the boys in Kensington Gardens—those who never seemed to have any fathers and mothers—who called us " d—— b—— tykes." What a " tyke " meant, I never discovered, but it was a great Victorian word. Not that we enjoyed being attired in Kate Greenaway trousers that reached up to the breast—things without buttons, too, that one couldn't get out of—or being addressed as " d—— b—— tykes " by the rapscallions who fished for sticklebacks in the Serpentine; we didn't; I hated my bumpkin suit and Macbeth looks, for by that time I had skimmed through a book or two and gathered that the proper length of a boy's hair was short. But it is the lot of children to obey,

at least, it was in our day, and so into the yokel smock-frocks we were placed by my mother, who was then passing through an acute stage of " greenery-yellowhood " as the result of perhaps too concentrated a study of religious philosophy in conjunction with the intoxicating æstheticism of the pre-Raphaelites; which at that time in a certain set, and pre-eminently the set to which we belonged, blew into the home, sweeping up every antimacassar in it, and which, I fear, my mother, unfortunately for us, confounded with the ivories and scapulars of religion.

That is the worst of religion, it is so symbolic. It must be theatrical. In truth, the times were large, and required frenzy, as religion always does, and especially at the climax of that metaphysical time. The roars and reverberations of Darwin, Mill, Carlyle, Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Tyndall, Lecky, the Stephens, " Mat " Arnold, etc.: of the historians, the logicians, the dialecticians, the metaphysicians, and the political economists of that age rumbled up into every self-respecting square, terrace or crescent in the Metropolis with the luggage on a four-wheeled cab; and piercing through the nimbus of these worthies, trumpeted the blare and blast of the poets, the new painters, the designers, the preachers, the philosophers and the individualists, such as Ruskin, William Morris, Walter Crane, Whistler, and the sweet song and fury of Burne-Jones and the Rossettis. Everybody was afoot in those sententious Victorian days, and words that had never been heard before even rent a hole in the terrible laws of blasphemy. Not only was everyone terribly in earnest, but one was deliciously and almost Paganly æsthetic, and the painters were even beating the philosophers in the gentle art of persuasion. London hummed with intelligence. On all sides, a boy caught such expressions as Athenian, quinquecento, utilitarian, fresh evidence, sociologic statics, etc., and even the man in the street seemed bent on moral, æsthetic, philosophical and religious quests. One thought in wall-papers. One talked biology. One dreamed of seraphic chins or of swan-like

necks. One sipped neo-Christianity or atheism with John Morley. One slept on Browning, Dean Milman, Cardinal Newman, "Puseyism," and not to be an ethicist, a sociologist, a Mark Pattison-ite, a Grant Allen-ite, a Congreve-ite, a synthetic Spencerian, a utilitarian Mill-ite or "dog against dog" Stephen-ite, or Positivist, or its intellectual anti, an Agnostic, or some kind of an apostle or proselyte was to be just nobody at all.

Perhaps I ought to insist upon the soulful nature of those times which rather went to people's heads. In its way this was England's Renaissance. I am not surprised now at the plethora of those philosophic syntheses. Some pretty big minds were knocking over long-cherished beliefs and conventions, and shibboleths were beginning to fall like autumn leaves. Men were in fell earnest, and some of these men were mountaineers with ice-axes, who seemed to be all bone and sinew, like Leslie Stephen, etc. Nor is it easy for us to-day to realize the symbolic agony created by the new school of painters who with their long-necked, long-chinned, stained-glass-window type of women "looking out of the bar of Heaven" started the æsthetic revival which gradually broke up the institutional gloom and ugliness of Victorian self-satisfaction.

My mother succumbed early to the mood and vestal drapery of the painters: I think it was Walter Crane who conquered her. In turn, she gowned us. We had the Greenaway smocks; we also had a fur-cap dress *à la Russe*, and we had a summer striped linen costume designed, I verily believe, after the pictures of the "Ten little Nigger-boys (and then there were seven)," which was a popular ditty in my youth. I find it is no good trying to be superior about it to-day; indeed, I am proud to think that I was part of the ache men had to get out of the drab conventionality and dreariness of that time, only most unfortunately I did not know then that clothes were an essential feature of the movement. We suffered greatly from Carlyle in those times. It was "Sartor Resartus" versus the Albert Memorial and the rest.

I doubt if London was ever so religious or cerebrally active as in the rousing days of that historical movement to which, I like to think now, our gaberdines contributed their mite, and eventually the movement won. I used to think that the boys in the parks were right, perhaps because I envied them their freedom and untidiness, but I can see now that costume was a genuine asset in the pious work of demolition on which my parents were engaged in the good company of the painters who wrote poetry, and of the poets who painted and of the tribe of agnostic philosophers. I do not know whether the point, which is a point, has been properly made, but I can see now that those elongated ladies' chins of Burne-Jones, those virginal lengths of Madonnahood, that sensuous poetry, those Thames monochromes, that mellifluous prose, that blasting sociology, that peacock imagism, that cold, insurgent, Gallic Positivism—these were all components of a purging iconoclasm which had become necessary to the very sanity of our Island, the " right little, tight little Island " of which we used to sing; and though Carlyle had pierced the tenebrific blight of Victorian rectitude with his strident Anglo-Saxon garrulity, the philosophers, who had no such vocabulary at their command and were too academically schooled in the classics to invent one, would hardly alone have won a constitutional victory without the cymbals and paint of the poets and artists who flabbergasted the honest citizen and disarmed his wife.

Had the philosophers of that time worked together, they might—but why conjecture ? Philosophers no more work together than do theologians or metaphysicians. With true unphilosophic compassion, they each and all set upon one another " at push of pike," tearing their several syntheses and systems into ribbons, and hurling tilting javelins at their respective tripods, as is the way with comparative and competitive mankind. Alone, without the poets, the painters, the decorators, the clothes, they resembled Robin Hood and his Merry Men in

Sherwood Forest, who surely but for his bugle blast would have got rounded up and hung, like Comte and Mill, and so cheated countless generations of Britons of a joyous chunk out of their history.

Fortunately, they were not alone. Paint and poetry strode in front bearing angelic, symbolic and seraphic formulas. This time paint was the bugle—and it captured the women who all developed Perugino faces—another tribute, by the way, to Art, which thus once more took wing in the chronicle of progress. Hence colour became the stay and accessory of philosophy, and my mother, with true feminine instinct, leaving the new and difficult male words to find their own way upwards, concentrated on an offensive in subtle " suitings," even as the Chelsea philosopher prescribed. It was a well-timed thrust. It harmonized and implicated the women. It disarmed the Victorian policeman.

Little did we know it, yet assuredly we were little " pages " of rationalist thought, patrolling Hyde Park. In these days, no doubt, the philosophers would have advertised; but in those days the gramophone had not yet been invented, and so clothes took the place of the newspaper. Unfortunately, we were not initiated in the reason, and we objected.

That is the worst of children—if only youth knew ! If, instead of saying to me, " Do as you are told and put on your Greenaway smock," my mother had waved me on to her lap and said, " My child, this suit is a symbol of hallowed reasoning heralding the dawn of a wider religious tolerance, and in wearing it you are helping beauty to creep back into London," I might have been astonished and I should probably have thought her pretty crazy, but I fancy some kind of enthusiasm would have been generated. Or, failing her blandishments, if my father had called me to him and sternly spoken: " My son, you and I are co-synthetists in a solemn work of critical purification, in which, even as the little choir boys or *seises* in the Cathedral of Seville, you must dance on the altar of

sacrifice in robes of culture." Or he might have varied the argument and said boldly: "Look you, in wearing velveteens, you are creating the atmosphere to assist Ruskin to establish Socialism, and Swinburne to evoke his sumptuous Paganism, and Whistler to paint his monochromes which some folk think indecent, who all three are helping 'us' to disenthral mankind." And again, as the walking indenture of Walter Crane, "you are a little pioneer of moral evolution, lighting an inextinguishable lamp. You are a pocket Saint George slaying the dragon of mediaeval mysticism, curbing the tyranny of ecclesiastical obscurantism and the anguish of brooding frustration, and therefore you must help. Help the synthetic lance of Herbert Spencer who attacks me, and of Agnostic Huxley who attacks Comte, and of myself who attacks Mill for his outrageous theory about women——," had my father so talked, I might, I hope, have understood something about evolution.

But the Boy Scouts had not yet been invented and Age was still intolerant, and as my father did not stoop to explain, I understood nothing. I did not relish my predicament. I did not know that "we" were but frets of our father's instrument, bearing the roses and garlands of the "new truth" into the amphitheatre—where the rude boys lurked—of Kensington Gardens, like doughty cherubims. I did not perceive the method. I did not care about problems of theology. How should I, *aetas* eight, who had never been inside a church, know that I was a cadence of my mother's religious emotion, an electron of the Humanist annunciation! I did not understand that only the soul moves man to passion and that therefore symbols and pomp are the straw that lights the fire. How was I to realize that I was a purchaser of good, a cleanser of temples, a grammarian of sociology? I might have worn my locks, like a scholar, had I but had an inkling of my poor significance. Had I but known! Alas! I only saw, and I fear I disliked Walter Crane intensely and thought him a thoroughly

bad artist, for he seemed to me to be seriously lacking in perspective.

None the less, I think it is lucky that before the famous Metaphysical Society talked itself out, the Pre-Raphaelites came to the rescue. Who they were and what they wanted, I never knew, but they palpably saved the situation. I remember meeting Professor Lecky on the Channel boat on rather a rough passage, and my father explained who the great man was. He was not looking his best, tucked up in a plaid-rug, and I wondered at the time how a man could be a " well-known " historian and a rationalist who looked so inocuous and lean. He seemed to me to lack fire. The painters were of a Greek stamp, who seemed to write better than they painted. Whistler was quite the most dangerous controversialist of his time, more subtle than Huxley, less sententious than my father, and as venturesome as either. I did not read Swinburne then, but I often heard his name mentioned *sotto voce*, and I gathered that he was a terrible fellow who drank pints of beer in clubs and flung Pagan chants at the bishops across the dining-table. A man to worship, but not to know. Then there were Walter Crane and Richmond who lived at Hammersmith, where on one or two occasions we had good fun. These men seemed to be doers and thinkers. Burne-Jones stood on a pedestal. One was expected to look up. I liked him, but I hated his women whom I considered attenuated and altogether too thin, too like those " woeful " creatures my father would take me to see in museums and talk dates to. Why talk dates to pictures ? I preferred Rubens and his school. As for Rossetti's women, all skin and bone, I could not abide them, but my father raved and quoted Dante, and I used to believe that my mother tried to make her neck look longer, which at that period was regarded as a great beauty.

Nor can I omit Ruskin who was also a missionary. His name cropped up daily. My father rarely got through a meal without referring to that important personage. I don't

think I ever saw him, but he, too, I gathered, dwelt in some lonely stronghold where he feasted on words, gargoyles, fruit and assonance and never saw mortal man, just as I heard Mill had done and, indeed, most of the "old boys," as my father named them, who did big things. So far as I could learn, they all fought one another, all the learned ones. There was always a row. For these great "old boys" seemed to be terribly jealous, unsocial and mean towards one another. Perhaps the favourite of this group was Spencer. My father spoke of Herbert Spencer with bated breath. He obviously dearly loved this old recluse who lived, like a hermit, with a sister. London seemed to me to be divided up into zones of wonderful houses inhabited by queer, old, fierce, literary men, and much as I disliked my own clothes I could not but recognize the social power wielded by the painters who congregated by the river.

They, at least, were "sports." More; they were the real crusaders. It was the Pre-Raphaelites who made the new religious philosophy credible, and they were jolly fellows as well. Walter Crane was full of gaiety. They had a sort of Attic flavour which I could see was infectious. Their ties were large and parti-coloured. Their locks flowed out luxuriantly. They wore their throats low. They had the Tennysonian picturesqueness, and he was splendid, and they were very generous with fruit. But I never got any fruit out of my father's literary friends, who were rather "dry" customers and fearfully punctilious. They were the kind of men who stalked about the heather, wrapped up in a cloak, like Professor Blackie whom I delighted in, for he entered a room, like the villain in old Adelphi melodrama, and then he would throw off his Scottish plaid, hold out his arms and embrace my mother rapturously on both cheeks. That was the type I liked. But Morley never did that, nor did any of the literary men. Blackie kissed like an Elizabethan. He never stopped talking, and he was splendidly handsome. If there ever was such a thing as a school of Victorians,

Blackie was its arch-type (Scotice); unfortunately, he lived in Edinburgh and we only saw him occasionally.

If philosophy burst through the prejudice of that age, it must, I think, be attributed to the anarchic splendour of the artists who sang Pagan songs and painted mediaeval pictures and made every woman in London with a husband of no importance long to turn her walls into patterns of delphiniums. In this way, Agnosticism became reputable, and I doubt if it ever would have become reputable without this adventitious aid. It respectabilized Atheism. Words alone are rarely sufficient. A little "mysticism" is always useful, and what defeated "old Oxford" was this ethicization of mediaevalism which broke out in paint and rhyme and house decoration, and materialized, so to speak, on the walls of boudoirs. It resembled a "brighter London" movement, and not to be of it was to be out of that peculiar centre of activity known as "society," which in the 'eighties was a pretty exclusive institution, not in the least plutocratic. It was Burne-Jones who made it possible for Lecky to "stand" as a representative of Dublin University; it was Swinburne who made it possible for John Morley to continue his blithe career in politics; it was Ruskin who made it possible for Bradlaugh to pass a Bill validating the oath of a freethinker; it was Walter Crane who made it possible for my father to open Newton Hall and yet remain a respected member of the Athenæum Club; it was William Morris who made it possible for Darwin to be buried in the Abbey, and because the painters were not vocal in Mill's time, his "Subjection of Woman" fell flat and he himself was to die in the pathos of voluntary exile at Avignon.

Shelley, Keats and Byron had no philosophy of clothes, and no painters behind them, who wrote better poetry than they did, and so—they fled. But Huxley's horn had Swinburne's Paganism behind him, and Ruskin found no difficulty in converting the ladies, when, as a political rebel, he addressed them socialistically as "Lilies." The

difference is one of dramatization, or getting across the footlights. Behind the great debating clubs of the time, there stood the boudoirs of the new æstheticism, without which I doubt if the males would have won. The boudoirs released the women. Thus my father returned from his nights with the philosophers to the luscious warmth of Pre-Raphaelite inspiration. In his library he had the Greeks in rows of statues. Upstairs, he had a peacock-blue wall which looked very well against his books. It was thus that the new Logos took root. The word was painted in, and philosophy had a setting. This was of crucial importance. And just as religion in mediaeval times caught the soul of man in stone and spire, so philosophy caught a new spirit of religion through paint and poetry, and in the harmony Reason was born. We must not forget the painters and poets when we honour the philosophers. We must go even further back. When we think of the Victorians, let us remember that it was Shelley who had made these poets and these painters " possible."

I fondly believe I would have rejoiced with my elders had I grasped that even Mrs. Grundy was having momentary palpitations, and that the fireworks at the Crystal Palace (which paid then), were not so bright as the glittering squibs of the controversalists who wrote out of sheer conviction, regardless of money and of consequence; or that even serpentine " Zaza," who used to be shot out of a cannon right across the old Aquarium (where a chap met anybody and everybody) was not more splendid in her grace or disseminating in her parabolic flight than were the daily beams of light and learning issuing from the laboratories of the new humanist projectors. I don't pretend that I did not enjoy the strawberries and cream of Walter Crane, or the rat hunts round Kelmscott House, where dwelt the great philosopher of wall-papers, or the " almond-rock " provided by a celebrated æsthete who dabbled in Greek " mysteries " and worshipped Hermione; and I even danced or played " oranges and lemons" with lovely maidens at the beautiful home of Burne-

Jones—where I grossly misbehaved by asking the son (now Sir Phillip) for an ice—yet I remained ignorant of the purpose of my apparel ! I believe my brother did dimly visualize his mission as a dissolvent, as a liquidator of spent values, but I had no such æsthetic or sociological intuition. I might have been a worthy protagonist of Holman Hunt, in cowboy shaps, had my parents so wished it. I might have gone forth into the Parks, like a candid reformer and offered the other cheek. But I was a miserable iconoclast. I was no Hellenist of the new universalism. I just blubbed like a wretched little heathen. Alas ! not knowing that my father was the religious "wonder" of that period.

Nevertheless, we were not crushed. I well remember a terrific outburst of tears when on a Sabbath visit to Walter Crane I refused to wear the elastic of my straw hat under my chin, which a boy in the park had informed me was "unmanly." It was the revolt of innocence.

Our gaberdine fashion lasted about a year, yet I cannot recall my father's opinions upon our appearance; I believe he secretly disapproved of it. It was, I know, my mother's hobby. How I loathed it ! It ended by so isolating us from democratic association with the other boys who hunted Red Indians in the parks, in defiance of the police and of sociology, that I fancy there must have been a discussion, at which we were not present, for suddenly the abominated frock was dropped and to my immense relief we returned to knickers; also, I think, Truefitt, who was then supposed to be the only genteel barber in town, sheared our locks one afternoon back to normal masculine dimensions.

This sartorial propensity of my mother gave me my first conscious political opinions, which were not, I grieve to say, always as respectful as they might have been. Children are perceptive creatures, and I clearly perceived even in those days of soulful individualism that a martyr's lot was by no means a happy one. My brother, Bernard, and I frequently discussed this aspect as we sauntered about the Round Pond in search of a solution. I submitted

that something was amiss with our parents. It was not "fair." I saw no reason why we should be the recipients of mud-balls hurled by urchins from behind trees; or why, if our parents had some sartorial motive to display they did not themselves brave the elements of the public Parks in gaberdines and long hair draped to the shoulder. My brother, who was older and always far more learned than myself, explained it on grounds of æstheticism, but I was not convinced. Besides, he himself was suspect as a declared artist who preferred a pencil to a ball. I saw no redeeming feature in his presentation of the case, and I think it made me a confirmed and incurable agnostic by way of inverted ratiocination. If "this is God," I reasoned, "or religion"—and to me the words were synonymous—"give me trousers."

I believe the change came about through our association with the Howards (later Lord Carlisle, who was a great friend of my father's), of whom there were many and who rather adopted a Spartan conduct, and it may be that words passed between our respective mothers, which ultimately relieved us of our robes. Yet the wearing of this uniform left a profound impression upon me. I came to view my parents as "odd," as perhaps martyrs themselves. People, I thought, who would deliberately send out their children to be mocked at in public places were either unkind or extraordinarily "religious," and if the latter, which I suspected, what on earth was religion? Anyhow, I dated from that experience, so little do small boys relish being guyed. I began gravely to contemplate my parents, to differentiate and find fault. And it was a shock to me to discover that it was my mother who had the sartorial craze which so enraged me. I don't think my father cared for it, but as he did not interfere he stood convicted in my eyes of collusion. He also rather laughed at my objections—which made it worse. I believe with all children the unforgivable parental sin is mockery. Hence, at the age of nine, I must have been decidedly on the side of Professor Huxley, and even of Swinburne who had

" shocked " the philosophers, and I knew he was " shocking " for I had overheard one of the great Victorians refer to him as a " paragon and a Pagan," and the sort of fellow who could not be trusted with a flagon of ale. Looking back to-day, I think philosophy owes much to the Pre-Raphaelite method. Had it not been, Smithfield might well have been relighted with the bones of Spencer, Huxley and Frederic Harrison, and even Ruskin " thrown in " to appease the multitude.

Chapter V

BOYHOOD MEMORIES

PROBABLY our sartorial experience is the explanation of a somewhat precocious critical attitude which my brother and I undoubtedly developed at an age when values are not generally appreciated. I was able to distinguish sharply between my mother's religious æstheticism and the rationalism of my father, and I divined that in the matter of raiment my mother ordained. It was she who had the power to dress us up fantastically, not my father. It was she who defined the atmosphere of the house, the big flowers on the walls, the peacock gowns and feathers stuck behind the picture-frames; who regulated our strict milk-pudding diet and the appalling sago in dry blobs, and I thoroughly sympathized with my father's habit of bolting out, presumably in a towering rage, and violently slamming the front door so that I really hoped on one or two occasions that the glass would crack.

That sort of thing invariably appeals to a boy, and I delighted in it. It inspired me with hope for the future, but when " we " slammed the door my father deeply resented it, both then and all through his life, which I always considered inconsiderate. And he was rather like that, a highly concentrated and concentric man who, in his own house, claimed privileges denied to lesser folk. Hence from an agnostic, I rapidly became a critic. One could not help being a bit metaphysical. Clothes matter inordinately to children. If they imagine they are being attired in an unsuitable or conspicuous way, they are apt to get all

manner of things in their heads. I know I did. I wondered; I suffered; I nursed a grievance. Finally, it left me with an acrid feeling of the rights of individual conscience which has never left me. I became, I fear, a decidedly naughty boy.

I thus reached the stage when I was no longer dutiful, when I could see my parents critically, and among other things I recall only too vividly the " functionism " of the Victorian home. This, again, was my mother's sphere. In those days the children not only lived rigidly apart under the care and control of nurses, but they only " appeared " at stated intervals and at stated times, which in our case was " after tea." There, in the drawing-room, my mother presided and " received " us, and we were brought down washed and dressed for the occasion.

In the case of my older brother and myself these " rituals " were, so far as I know, of a happy nature—indeed, they must have been, so well can I recollect them. My mother read to us, or discoursed to us about the " more serious problems " of life, and in our velveteens, with wide lace Greenaway collars, we sat at her feet in rapt attention, and it was thus I acquired my first knowledge of Adam and Eve, of Genesis and of palingenesis. But in the case of my younger brothers these rituals were less even; my youngest brother, in particular, objected strongly to leave the nursery for the big room downstairs and would howl ferociously. Whether it was due to infatuation for his nurse I do not know, but certainly dear René, who was killed in 1915, was no Victorian. He would yell, " I want to be my Nanny's chippy ! " and had to be introduced into the drawing-room by force. His views at a very early age on these matters of courtesy were most improper, yet I don't remember sympathising with him, and I don't believe I shared his fierce denunciations of the drawing-room, but rather the contrary. Still, it was a function and a formality, and I think that if parents want to know their own children they should copy Mohammed, most practical of men, and themselves go to the mountain,

seeing how frequently children, if handled vicariously, are apt to behave as they are done by.

My mother's æstheticism extended into the domain of education and, acting on a theory which emanated from my father, who adopted it from Auguste Comte, she took over the difficult rôle of teacher. My mother had a genius for teaching and I can remember those interesting lessons to this day; she was the strictest teacher I ever had. We were not "exquisites" at lesson-time, anyhow, and we remained under her care until the "awful" moment arrived when my father thought a boy should learn Greek as well as Latin in which, by the way, my mother had already grounded us, and that Homer necessitated a man.

Ought parents to teach? I feel doubtful. A schoolmaster is not a parent, and children, perforce, regard all instruction with disfavour. Not all children, of course, yet certainly many do, and the moment the spell of parenthood becomes entwined with the virgo of authority, without which it is not easy to teach, something goes which is not easily recoverable. Perhaps my brother never felt like that, for he was precocious and learnt easily, but I did, and as lessons became more and more a drudgery demanding, *per contra*, an increasing severity, I felt that opposition of a sort was legitimate on my part, if only to preserve my own sense of dignity, especially as about that time I was wholly enamoured of Robinson Crusoe and of all boys who ran away to sea. It led to a still more critical attitude which, coming on the top of the æsthetic dress experiment, rather shattered my belief in the infallible mercy of a parent who was now disposed to hug and now apt to rap me across the knuckles with a ruler. Still, those must have been bounteous times for us and they stand out in my mind with curious precision. We shared our parent's discoveries. We dwelt in their grace and wisdom, and my brother and I grew up like Ruskin's little "floppy tadpoles," till one morning a tall, pale, thin, pathetic-looking man with a gentle voice and a Florentine smile walked into

the room and told us with a boisterous laugh that his name was George Gissing.

My mother did not repeat the experiment with my younger brothers who were duly sent to school. I fancy by then she had somewhat modified her early opinions, but " we," of course, met the full blast of marital experimentation in that renascent period which really, as we can see now, was a frontal attack on theology. I think it rather increased the distance between us and " them." It was not easy to be a loving and dutiful parent at one and the same time. We learnt, at least I did, to hide things from the control, and instead of bringing us together it rather drove us apart. My mother was not, after that, my balm of distress, nor was it till I went to school that I quite got over the sensitiveness engendered by her admirable scholastic efforts.

Good intentions are not altogether sufficient for children, who require demonstration. I did not adequately appreciate my mother's tutorial activities. I suppose human nature is like that, and the opposition roused may explain sundry difficulties I experienced in what must have been the model atmosphere of our home life. Its grave decorum, its sweet synthesis, its orderliness and calm, its dignity and space, all this is vividly impressed upon my memory, and in the centre I can see the dominant figure of my father, like a steel wire, strong and wise and tender. A home such as ours is, perhaps, too good for a boy, by which I mean it becomes too much the centre of his world which he never wants to leave. I imagine I was a difficult boy. Home to me was joy, not lessons, and when lessons came I rebelled. In such circumstances what is a poor parent (who teaches) to do ? If he or she allows the boy to idle it is undoubtedly a mistake; and if the parent " takes steps " the boy will probably resent them—which is also a mistake. That represents my attitude at that time.

Unforgettable as these lessons were, I rather suspect that I needed more drastic treatment than I received, for

when George Gissing became our tutor I quickly perceived that for all his waxed moustache and strong, athletic stride, he was no disciplinarian. Gissing's lessons were to me a lasting joy. We simply worshipped him. At first we behaved abominably and once started singing, but he stopped that summarily by suddenly rising and quitting the house—without a word but with a look that appalled us. We rushed out into the street and implored him to return, yet he was adamant. After that we were much better behaved. I can distinctly recall how pathetic he seemed to me. He became a dear friend and my great delight was to get him to stop for lunch, for I felt he was " our " friend and needed sympathy. This required manœuvring, as it was not always convenient. The procedure I found most successful was to drag my lessons on till the gong sounded and then run into the library and tell my father that Mr. Gissing was " going to stay " for lunch, which he frequently did. The conversation which ensued always thrilled me. On the whole, I secretly " backed " Gissing, for his humanity was so different to my father's. He rather took the side represented by the boys in the Park with whom I had had encounters, and I felt strangely attracted towards a man with so much learning who yet seemed so woebegone and deplorably miserable. And yet he loathed misery and degradation. I think my father was disappointed in Gissing's sociology, which was purely fictional. He could not understand a man who knew all about the sordid conditions of poorer London and yet had no religion. Gissing could not understand a man talking about religion who did know all about London's sordid ugliness. He had little sense of religion. His interest in the side of life which Dickens depicted so adroitly with humour, was realistic. He felt it so deeply that he could see no redress. My father tried to stimulate some moral enthusiasm in him, but Gissing could not respond. He viewed politics with an almost puerile disdain. He was a voluptuary in pessimism, and seemed to delight in social degradation, yet at the same time to

loathe it with a fierce intellectual contempt. Hence Gissing's attitude rather crossed my father's, and I could sense the difference. Nobody could make a theist or a humanist out of Gissing, and the two men together presented a strange and startling contrast.

Gissing's social pessimism was largely the consequence of fortune. One could not be surprised after his youthful experience of school-life, stories and anecdotes about which he told with dramatic zest. An extraordinary brutality prevailed. Masters appeared to flog at random in his particular school, and schools were very rough places in those days. Gissing used to say " thwack " with tremendous emphasis of the *th*, yet a gentler creature never lived. He had no punishments. When we offended he would address us in Latin or Greek, or just stare until we felt ashamed, then he would burst out laughing. I remember telling him I wanted to be a novelist, at which he shouted with mirth. " It's the trade of the damned," he said; " far better be a crossing-sweeper." It is curious to recall how badly so polished a scholar as Gissing wrote in those early days. He submitted things full of errors and commonplaces to my father, who criticized him like a schoolmaster. Gissing at parties was an unforgettable spectacle of misery. He would sit in a corner of the room, crouched together like a wet bird, silent and strangely watchful. He had no small talk. He looked like a figure of despair in " society." But to us he talked amazingly. I loved to make him boil with indignation. The accounts of his midnight wrestlings over his first novels, supported by pints of tea, always held me spellbound. Gissing certainly knew the " heavenly power " of nightly tears and travail.

I wish I had overheard the private talks between my father and Gissing, for Gissing would sometimes emerge pensively and throw me that curious smile which I had learnt to associate with trouble. My father advised him to write for John (Lord) Morley, then editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and Gissing wrote an article or two and

then mysteriously stopped. He told us he thought it " degrading " to write on a newspaper. My father was annoyed about this, but Gissing could not be persuaded to resume such " prepostrous trash," as he called it. What a cruel age it was ! One day there was a great crisis. Someone had informed my father about Gissing's boyhood escapade which, at the age of sixteen, had landed him in gaol—think of sending a lad of that age to prison!—and there was a long morning's explanation. My father, though strongly counselled not to employ a man who had suffered the penalty of the law, refused to be influenced, and behaved with splendid human courage, and Gissing remained till we both went to school. My father was always trying to drive some ethical balance into him, but Gissing was not to be illuminated by Comte or Ruskin or any other dispenser of social syntheses. He would say, " I must wallow and describe." My father would reply, " No, you should regain your moral strength through social enthusiasm." They were æsthetic incompatibles, yet, but for my father's help and influence, I question whether Gissing would have come through that difficult period, when a man wrote a three volume novel and sold it for eighty pounds.

Though my father was not an easy man to talk to, held rigidly definite opinions and, in his own house, resented argument and was intolerant of opposition, I had no fear of him in the sense that many boys feared their fathers in those days and, as a fact, we were as youngsters rather encouraged to talk at table if only to be firmly and consistently squashed. I saw that somehow my father was, outside the house, a teacher, like any other clergyman. Perhaps if he had worn a black coat and white tie, I might have understood somewhat better, but he wore no livery. He spoke the great Victorian oath zealously. He did not smack of the Church. And he did not sing hymns on Sunday evenings. None the less we knew he was a very " good man "; still there was just this about it that struck a dividing note. I understood with a sharp distinction,

usual enough in those times, that children had a hard-and-fast place which they crossed at their peril, and in those days in many a family the parental rubicon was no laughing matter. My father managed without a rubicon or rod, from the height of example.

Our religious training was slight and left entirely in the hands of my mother. It took the form of subtle auto-suggestion which taught us to think for ourselves and question, and one of the first things I learnt was a wholesome distrust of miracles. I can see now the point of this instruction which, in my case, went home, but I do not feel so sure of its wisdom in the long run. In the golden years one needs some latitude in credulity. To believe in Santa Claus is not a bad creed. Even mystery has a philosophy. I neither had Claus nor the Stalk. My fancy slumbered and possibly I missed certain of the revelations, some of the illuminations, and even some of the beatifications of youth consequent on my parents' dream of the mercy of reason and of the providence of truth. I learnt to doubt. I gathered no spell.

To-day, two of us have returned to the old faith, though Positivism in its philosophic form is a world-wide article of belief. Our parents were then going through, in a civilized form, the experiences of the early Christians, and if not faced with lions in an arena they were certainly faced with scorpions, which would naturally cause them to be careful. Somehow I felt that. The teachableness of children is proverbially doubtful and the Beyond is always their divinity. I did not peer over horizons. I only *saw* the moonlight and the spring flowers, the waters and the rustling leaves. I did not marvel at them. Our minds were not directed to catch fire. The intention was reason, not instinct. Our natural improvisation was rationalized, so to speak. We were nailed to the microscope of fact rather than fancy and were supposed to be " practical " children. I do not feel sure about it. The theory of education shifts like the fashions of science. Then, we were happily non-inquisitive. Now I sometimes wonder whether

reason is a children's motive; whether wisdom is impartible; whether there is much that is helpful in it when it is. Ultimate wisdom, of course—learning, is a different matter. I wish I could recollect how it was I sensed this religious difference in my parents, which separated them from other people, for I could have known nothing about it from outside; yet beyond the extravagant attempts of a nursery-maid to make me understand the sincerity of the devil, whom my mother had early and conclusively dethroned and disembowelled, I cannot now imagine how I derived the sensation of schism that my brother and I clearly divined to be the lot of the family. For our religious teaching amounted to the simplest kind of maternal explanation, rather like the game of ninepins. She herself had been brought up a strict orthodox and knew her subject well, and we had a large book of Biblical pictures which thrilled us, especially the ones with angels and lights streaming from the sky. There were no closed doors in our case. We discussed these pictures avidly. Only their interpretation was different. The haloes puzzled us (I've forgotten their explanation), and the Nativity was a prime favourite, though I never could understand the presence of cows in the stable. In this way we dipped into the Old Testament, if not with the new German criticism, at least with the French one.

My father never spoke to me about religion or gave me any sort of instruction, but we had a home ritual in the form of prayers or collects which he conducted on Sunday mornings, coupled with a short address. These ceremonies impressed me deeply. I don't suppose I realized it then, but no doubt the impression I had of my father as a very religious man arose out of these lectures, not so much because I understood the words, but because I liked to watch him reading from his manuscript book and listen to his serious, somewhat censorious voice, and I felt that he was on those occasions a pretty tremendous man. Of course, theology was omitted, and when subsequently I went to school, my form master informed me that my

spiritual training had been " sadly neglected." But that did not worry me at the time, though once when on a Sunday afternoon we went out to play cricket with the Howards and an old Irish crossing-sweeper informed me with unrecordable imprecations that if we played on the Sabbath we should " all go to hell," I returned with certain doubts which even my mother's explanations did not completely dissipate, for there might, I reasoned, be something in the story of a bottomless pit which burnt all evil and never went out. None the less, if I learnt little, I must have imbibed negatively fairly well. I never doubted the wisdom of my father and have never since had any searchings of the heart. I grew up, as the converted girl who tried to convert me said, " like a horrid little atheist."

I have later in life been asked whether our home was not an uncomfortably stern one in which we boys were overpowered by the stern piety of my father. Nothing could be further from the truth. My father's piety was innate, not acquired, and therefore did not show. Compared with some homes that I have known, ours was an easy-going place in which the projection of " fear " which is, or used to be, the implement of most religious discipline, was entirely and wholesomely eliminated. Far from being a martinet or tyrant or mentor, my father was as obvious as he was human. He never coerced us, least of all about religion. There was nothing of the old hell-fire Puritanism about Positivism, and I suppose that we were as free as any children could be to read or think what we liked. He was neither a disciplinarian nor a pietist, and he was scrupulously just. Every boy recognizes a just man. His manner was dictatorial, no doubt, and he was fond of " moral " lectures, but we soon came to see that this didactism was a habit, like certain of his other superficial characteristics, and, I fear, paid only too little attention to them. We were never chastised—I don't think he could have chastised us. The notion that our Humanist home was grim or dull or chill or unlovely is wholly erroneous. He himself was a glad man full of

interests and enthusiasms. He was incapable of pose or any form of make-believe. He had neither the idiosyncrasies of a professor, nor the eccentricities of the artist, still less had he any of the affectations worn by men of the cloth. In his home he was always a hale and hearty Victorian who sipped his port after dinner and delighted in a good story. It was a foible of his to appear like any other good citizen. He wore no badge and carried no faggot. As for an aureole other than that which he inspired, we did not know what such a thing meant.

A rationalist upbringing carries with it certain curtailments. Thus we never had Christmas-trees, or hung out stockings (I can see the reason now for a discretionary celebration of that festival). Then we avoided fairies (as a matter of fact, my father was " getting them up " himself at that time); we skipped the usual hocus-pocus of make-believe (this may have been an omission) through which most children pass; we were led rather to strip Alice in her Wonderland than to worship her, but we delighted in Struwelpeter and other historical heroes of romance, from the " Jackdaw of Rheims " to " Pilgrim's Progress," which latter was a favourite. Perhaps we were brought up too cleverly, too much isolated from other boys. To be a Positivist in those days of rigidly-set views demanded considerable moral courage, and I suppose my parents feared outside influence upon us, and they likewise carefully avoided developing our sense of the mystical, or anything in the nature of superstition. In a rationalist home one doesn't get so much of the other things, that is all. Cards, for instance. My father objected to cards, which I think was a pity, for cards give an excellent training in figures and sharpen a child's mind considerably. Ajax and Hector do not take the place of " jacks " and " aces " as a preparation for service in a commercial world, and a boy of eight who can play a double " Canfield," like a grown-up, may be said to have expectations. I don't know why my father disliked parlour-games, but he certainly did dislike them; I fancy they just bored him.

I used to ascribe that prejudice, too, to the Pre-Raphaelites who, also, surely did not play cards. The word " Pre-Raphaelite " exercised me sorely, and I hated the sound of it, for they did not really belong to " our " set, and then they all seemed to have exotic names which clashed with Comte's Frenchmen, and I felt confounded. I had a sort of sneaking notion that they were not as good as they ought to be. My father liked the lawyers—" old this " or " old that," and many of these men had magnificent heads. My father's admiration for lawyers was natural, though why so many of them should be Alpine climbers, I never could conceive. I thought it hardened them and made them worthy of the title of " gentleman." One had to behave, like a book, which was perhaps not so easy for men who painted or wrote books, and I knew something about that from George Gissing who was not a Pre-Raphaelite, and always seemed to me to be cruelly neglected by the very people who should have supported him; but then he wrote novels which commerce had not then exploited, and he wrote in form and spirit against Dickens—which was regarded as little short of a crime. But if we did not get parlour-games, we got plenty of music, or rather, we heard music, for my mother was a good musician and played the piano admirably and was a founder of and active worker for the concert " pops." The result was that our home had a decided Bohemian atmosphere, what with rehearsals and musical evenings, which I'm not sure that my father altogether approved of, for my mother practised studiously at that time; and though my father enjoyed music and had trained himself to appreciate the classics, he never could stomach Bach, just as later he could not abide Wagner, which showed how genuine his musical limitations were. Bach fugues were too much. He would rush upstairs and burst into the drawing-room in a fury, exclaiming: " Can't you stop this infernal Bach ? It gets on my nerves and I can't write." The spinet simplicity of Bach seemed to grate upon his ears. His favourite composer was Mozart. My

father professed to like Brahms, but he drew the line at Bach and he detected him unerringly. Bach is, of course, a test. You either love or you hate him, and to my father he was anathema.

One hesitates to use the word " culture " to-day, yet I suppose such would describe the atmosphere in which we were educated before schoolmasters were enjoined with the task. We sang at the piano with my mother; we had the run of a big library, and sometimes my father would read Shakespeare to us. I can remember these readings poignantly because for some reason that I cannot now explain they invariably set up fits of giggling on our part, which sometimes proved uncontrollable. I am inclined to think that our giggling fits were the result of some form of suppression which found vent whenever the pressure was too high, just as people laugh at horror in a theatre. My brother was better behaved, but I rarely could listen without explosions, and when my father got excited, as, for example, over Macbeth, all control vanished and I would just shriek with laughter. My father invariably took these rude exhibitions on our part with good nature. I think he thought we misinterpreted the words. As a fact, we laughed hysterically, though why I cannot imagine—emotionalism probably.

None the less, I loved these Shakespeare evenings, and in our enthusiasm we started a theatre of our own and produced a play in blank verse called " The Tetrarch of Ephesus," of which we gave a public performance. Gissing laughed so heartily at my " blank verse " that it was a pronounced success. I would often sit on the arm of the chair and make imaginary partings in my father's hair while he was imitating the ghost of Hamlet, but I don't think he liked having his hair deranged. These readings were a great success, despite the mirth they provoked, and when, later on, we were taken to the Lyceum to see Irving, our joy approached delirium. Nor ought I to forget to say that my father was never too busy to see us. We could always burst in his room and interrupt. He

was always at our disposal. True, we went in at our risk, for he was terribly fussy in the sanctum of the library and hated us to touch his pens or ink-pot, and, when he was in one of his irascible moods, it was certainly inadvisable. Even then we were not afraid, for his temper was subjective and constitutional. It was a condition rather than a consequence. I will refer to it later.

Some people found my father's fussiness rather trying, but to us who had grown up with him, it seemed normal. He would constantly cry " Take care ! " if he saw one of us with a knife or light; his care and caution and " anxiety" were a source of amusement in the family and had a distinctly comic flavour. Yet he himself was singularly hardy. He was a good swimmer; he played cricket with tremendous enthusiasm, and bowled a real round-arm " bailer " that came in from the off; he was an indefatigable walker, if not of the doughty calibre of Leslie Stephen and Sir Frederick Pollock; a good rider, and he loved mountaineering; he played lawn tennis, sculled, and his long Sunday tramps were the terror of his family. I remember him laughing at John Morley in Switzerland when I was about twelve, for Mr. Morley (as he then was) was no *Gletschermann*. My father revelled on snow-ice and never got tired. I don't think I ever heard him say he was tired, and I used to believe that he couldn't be. Certainly, his physical powers were unusual; he never consulted a doctor, and after he had reached seventy he left off spectacles and read with the naked eye.

He was the most orderly and punctilious of men, meticulously fussy about his clothes, and as tidy as a housekeeper. He would flick off a speck of dust from his sleeve, as if the thing offended him. In one point only I felt indubitably his superior. He could not whistle. Somehow his lips never could produce that joyous sign of manhood, for he could only whistle by drawing in, like a girl. In the days when we had a dandie-dinmont dog which consistently ran away my father was at a decided disadvantage. To see him stampeding about the heather trying to

whistle-in this adored, but atrociously wilful dog, was exquisitely droll, and I believe the dog knew it; certainly my father was very fond of the creature, and he got plenty of exercise chasing after it, making vain and ludicrous efforts to produce the proper sound. But Grip, the dandie-dinmont, was not my father's real affection, which was reserved for his horse, Galopin, who was reputed to have a pedigree. This animal was an institution for many years and was most certainly a rare and remarkable cob, not only because he was about the only horse my father would, I fancy, have become attached to, but because no one else could be found who would ride him. Galopin was small, strong, dapper and fiery. His neck arched like a Flemish horse, and he had the small head and bearing of a steed of quality. His eyes were fierce and resolute with a " dam-my-eye " manner that placed him in a class by himself.

In my young days Galopin was my pet abomination, owing to an absurd and exasperating idiosyncrasy—he would amble. Nothing ever cured this habit. The horse could not or would not walk, and as I found it easier to fall off my pony than to stick on I was perpetually put to it to " keep up," as my father would roar out. Yet when I jogged up, and my pony bore into Galopin, Galopin would stop or shoot ahead. It was impossible to find a sociable pace with the beast. But this was not his only peculiarity. Galopin would not or could not trot. When he was supposed to trot, and my father tried for two decades to induce the creature to modify his steps, he pranced in a slow, high, showy canter. Again and again I have seen my father, shaking with rage and hurling oaths, jerk Galopin up and try to make him trot; it was no good. Off Galopin would go again, prancing, snorting, arching his neck and fuming, while the foam threw back upon my father and often flew into his eye—when verily Galopin seemed to smile.

Galopin had only two paces, his amble, which was a *chasséz* dancing-master step, and his canter, which was an

elegant prance, and with every prance he snorted. All other paces he disdained. Perhaps he came from a circus or Royal stud; he certainly " showed off " well; he, too, was indefatigable, fussy, irascible and irrepressible, in his way a genius, or as I considered, the bedevilment of a horse. I never saw this strange beast walk, and even on the lead he would amble up the street all the way back to his stall.

My father cursed and became almost superstitiously fond of him; and always pretended, but I never believed it, that he was a delightfully pleasant mount. He provided all the " constitutional " a man of sixty could possibly require, and in time Galopin appeared almost supernatural. He never aged or tired, though my father rode quite twelve stone at that time. Galopin would amble home after a three-hour spin still snorting and arching his proud neck, white with foam and steaming hot, but undaunted and incorrigible. His nervous system resembled my father's. The moment my father put his foot in the stirrup to mount, Galopin would start his prankish gait. Never once did he stumble or relax or yield, or in any way abate his paces, and he would shy at a steam-roller or at a perambulator to the end, like a two-year-old; and though he was admirable at gates (opening them), a brass band drove him frantic.

His age was biblical before my father was persuaded to ride him no longer, and when, shortly after, he died, my father never rode again. He felt he couldn't swop horses after so intimate an association. It was as if he had lost a friend, a spirit, a Victorian, and, indeed, his death did seem to close a family epoch. Galopin was more than a horse to my father, who rode him well over twenty years and cursed him volubly on every occasion. He bore the weight of a philosopher like a happy horse. He was a companion. I'm not so sure he wasn't an allegory.

How well I can figure my father at the age of fifty when we stayed at St. Adresse, near Havre, in the summer of 1882. It was for me rather a memorable visit because

odd things would keep on happening. On one occasion my brother and I flayed and dissected a rat and threw the remains on to the zinc roofing of our little house, which shortly afterwards became alive with maggots, and my father loathed insects. This time I expected drama, but we were forgiven. On another, I fell into a dangerous and unpleasant commodity while trying to catch a spider and was hauled out by my father. Then one night I had somehow got in my sleep under the enormous French clothes-cupboard where I could not move, and shouted for help. My father duly appeared from below with a candle and peered into the bed.

" Where are you ? " he cried. But I didn't know. I was pinned down and couldn't move. I shouted back: " I don't know, I can't make it out."

Round the room my father searched, and at last caught sight of a leg. He had to tip the old chest up to haul me out. He picked me up and placed me back in bed, and for a while sat with me. " Are you asleep ? " he said, rising to go. But I liked him to sit at my bedside and I cried out that I was not asleep. He said, " Tell me when you are." He was very preoccupied at that time. It was a long time before he rose and shut the door. Yet once more drama took place. Part of the roof fell in during a storm and I awoke to find myself half-choked with mortar and *débris*, almost afloat in a pool of water. Again I shouted and after a while up my father came, three steps at a time.

" Whatever is the matter now ? " he said, anxiously.

" I don't know," I replied. " I'm in the Channel, I think."

My cares disappeared as I watched my father vanish to fetch dry blankets, and still more as I saw him trying to rig me up a bed on a mattress in the dry part of the room. He wiped my face and dried me, and was as gentle as a nurse. And then again he sat with me until he thought I was asleep, which, of course, I wasn't, and when he rose, I asked him how it was that he was always dressed and awake. " I read," he told me, " and someday I expect you will, too."

But about a week later, having grave doubts, I determined to verify that statement, and stole down early in the morning to the little room where he sat. The book was on the floor and a large paper-knife lay on his lap. He was fast asleep in his armchair, and I gazed at him full of wonder and crept up and stroked his long flowing whiskers. He did not wake up. It was my first and last wholly intimate and possessive caress.

Chapter VI

A VICTORIAN TEMPERAMENT

IF religion is the expression of moral emotion, the religious man will be known by his temperament, and he generally is. As the Spaniard said, " Style is the man." Hence in the religious type, there are notably two main styles: the passionate and the ascetic. One can compare Savanarola with St. Francis, Calvin with Luther, Loyola with St. Bernard, or, again, very characteristically, Joan of Arc, the active mystic, with Auguste Comte, the affective philosopher, or even more so with Herbert Spencer, who rejected the affections.

The religious man is rarely passive. He burns. His mind is alight. He wants passionately to convince, and dispassionately to save mankind. In plain words, he is an extremist. Thus the Church is militant as an organization; it carries a Fiery Cross; it stands pre-eminently for discipline. History is its record. On the other hand, many, if not most of the great leaders, saints and apostles of religion are the exact opposite in temperament to their church. Their extremism turns to humility, to self-sacrifice, to martyrdom. They are the example of their thought. Their hungry, sensuous piety finds expression in the abstract rather than in the concrete, and in type they approximate close to that of the artist.

My father was neither the one nor the other. He was not a fanatic, or an ascetic; he was the passionate type of moral enthusiast. His eagerness was controlled and sublimated by the deep abstract sense of the thinker; he had

the temperament of the flesh, rather like the jovial bourgeois spirit of Luther. He really had two spiritual forces within him, contending for mastery, the one of religious emotion, the other of cold reason. Perhaps reason predominated, yet physically he certainly had little of the philosopher's temperament [and he was no Philistine], always seeking to act rather than merely to project his thoughts, as is so often the case with the artist. In this active sense, his temper may be described as Victorian.

No one could speak to him for five minutes without noticing his vivid and alert manner of speech, his mobile countenance, his extreme sensitiveness, and, as if to mask that defect, a certain hardness or brusqueness that was apt to mislead people. With increasing years this "indifferentism," to quote his own expression, stiffened; and, as he himself writes perhaps a little wistfully in his Memoirs, critics accused him of a "seared conscience" and of a "lack of sympathy" towards mankind—a reflection which, however biased and exaggerated, did contain sufficient superficial justification to cause him to refer to it and, characteristically, with indifferentism. As this trait is a clue to not a little in his character, it would seem worth while to trace its origin, seeing that by nature he was so large and genial and in every fibre of his being spacious. Moreover, he was *bon enfant*, always quick with humane spirit and generous. The cause, I fancy, lay in temperament, and in the years of its formation.

In one of the very few introspective references to his own life, there are a couple of sentences in the Autobiography, which throw some light on this point. He speaks of his lassitudes and sensitiveness as a boy, how quick he was to take offence, how apt to feel shame, and he admits that he "suffered horribly." Then he writes oddly: "And my suffering was invariably increased by the curious insensibility of all about me or their clumsy attempts to relieve me," thus showing that, like most creative natures, his boyhood was a time of mental strain and questioning, which he eventually learnt to master by force of will. At

the same time he writes, " I have not been able to perceive that my own boys suffer in this way; but I am sure that many children do."

These words are curious, and I find in them an explanation of a certain woodenness of mind that often perplexed me as a child. My father says himself that he was a silent boy, one who listened; nor is it difficult, even from the very few and bare allusions to himself in the Autobiography, to perceive that the boy who felt himself to be " unlike others," who never desired fame or notoriety, and when he went up to Oxford wrote home in misery to his father, complaining of the " isolation " in which he found himself, was not the normal type and must have had what is commonly known as the artistic temperament. Yet until I had read that passage in his book, it had never occurred to me to seek for the cause of it in his boyhood, so hale and sure and strong had he always seemed to me, though I had sometimes wondered how he had managed to emerge from school so utterly unordinary and distinctive. About himself he was always singularly reticent. He had a way, which was a part of his indifferentism, of closing down any memory or subject that was distasteful to him, and he scorned gossip. He detested personalities. His attitude about himself took the form of a negative: " there is nothing to tell." But evidently there was quite a lot to tell, and he refers to it casually in his Memoirs. There, for the first time, he speaks introspectively, perhaps a trifle bitterly. It is enough to show that as a boy he was shy, highly sensitive, odd, yet, despite his precociousness which placed him at fifteen at the top of his school, not in the least vain in the sense in which vanity acts as a spur of action.

Probably my father's boyhood was perturbed. He was petted by the boys and called by a girl's name at school, which irritated him profoundly, though why he was so called does not seem clear, perhaps because of his high colour and clear skin. His school-life, however, seems to have been quite happy, and he was strong and liked games.

If he was anything like as fussy, meticulous and temperamentally quick to take offence as a boy as he was as a man, I can readily conceive that even at a day school his days were not altogether uneventful, which perhaps explains his lifelong aversion to " barrack " education and that " ineradicable indifference " to success which was so marked a characteristic. To me, as a boy, this sensitiveness of his became apparent from my own school-days when I used to wonder how he had fared at school, he who seemed so unlike other men and who must have been so unlike other boys.

At the same time, I find it difficult to believe that he was ill-treated or had reason for unhappiness during his school period and I don't think he was, or he would not have done such good work, or have borne so affectionate a memory of his master, Mr. King; moreover, a boy endowed with his astonishing health could hardly have been neuropathic. He certainly was never delicate. The " horrible sufferings " to which he refers must have occurred later, when he was approaching adolescence. It was the clash of his own nature that distressed him. His introspective tendencies, his morbid depressions, hesitations and misgivings, the sense of loneliness, of doubt and self-depreciation: these were all sex symptoms of his age, such as afflict practically all boys of the artist nature, which at that time he misunderstood—the Victorians had no sex psychology. Yet the experience obviously marked him to an extent perhaps imperfectly realized.

My father probably went through the mill of morbid cerebration common in nearly all youths of a strong individualist and creative type, and, as he grew older and found his powers, he deliberately schooled himself to conquer what with his dominant moral nature he would consider to be a weakness. His great vitality and superb health would have stood him in good stead, and in addition to the high spirits which go with robust health, he had the reserve force of religious fervour with its refreshing glow of righteous indignation. I can see him

taking stock of the position and coming to a conclusion, which he would do with all the force within him. And so as a guard and gesture of social defence, for he was not the smiling type, was inordinately sensitive to chaff and could not conceal his mind with his mouth, he no doubt acquired a vizor of bearing and attitude which the rough-and-tumble of life accentuated. He probably found it necessary sternly to suppress and cloak his own feelings, and, as he was not light-handed and far too genuine to be artificial, the method he resorted to was drastic. The art of smiling had not then become a press advertisement. He learnt to shut down and to shut out.

He succeeded, though only partially. It gave him a somewhat harsh, abrupt and peremptory manner which was deceptive. It made him often seem unsympathetic and even unfeeling, which also was deceptive. Still, undoubtedly this mental armour with which he equipped himself as a youth, acting on a spirit naturally combative, self-assertive and individualistic, did blunt him, did become second nature, and did develop into a form of indifferentism that would occasionally astonish "us" who were, of course, unaware that our father had once enrolled himself as a "citizen of England," and had been regarded as a red-hot Republican. It was this controlled emotionalism that no doubt we felt as dividing and defining in our infancy; that kept him aloof from the little intimacies of the family and prevented him from sharing or attempting to share or even to consider the "possible sufferings" of his own children from a similar cause. He did not wholly trust himself, I fancy. He could not entirely unbend, hence he never appeared entirely natural, and no one senses this idiosyncrasy quicker than a child.

To me, this parental commentary is revelatory. My older brother, Bernard, showed precocious signs of the artistic temperament before he was three, and I can acutely remember the chagrin caused to my father at the prospect of his first-born turning out to be a painter,

instead, as was considered almost a point of honour of primogeniture in those days, of a double-first at Oxford, with leanings towards the Bar. As a fact, three of his sons were to follow artistic pursuits and all three must have shown, and did show, signs of the artistic temperament early in their lives. That my father should write that he never saw any signs of it in his own children cannot but strike me as extraordinary, for my mother had the artistic temperament, too, and our upbringing was rather conducive to eccentricity than not. Yet it explains a good deal that I never could understand, and it explains also his breakdowns in this respect, and why for so long I was always so astonished at the gentleness that invariably lay underneath the outward severity whenever there was real reason for anxiety, or the issue between " us " and " him " demanded sympathy.

When in later years my brother, Bernard, became a Roman Catholic, my father, though the conversion must have hurt him considerably, was surprisingly sensible and moderate, and was even spiritually interested. How often, too, have I not disappointed him, being dreamy and lazy as a boy, partly as the result of poor health, and yet found in him a rock to cling to upon whom I could invariably depend.

My father's " indifferentism " probably arose out of his difficulties in youth. His magnificent health enabled him to overcome his natural shyness, which, however, remained always apparent in his tendency to vehemence and that harshness that he wore as a cloak. He was conscious of it and sometimes jested about it. Probably at Oxford, where at first he felt so " isolated," he found an " indifferentism " useful. He was then going through a severe moral crisis, and he had not the passive temperament of an ascetic. Quite the contrary. He was a very full-blooded man. It gave him a manner which was not always *suaviter in modo*.

But my father never really conquered his shyness. His loud voice that so astonished porters and waiters, his

tempestuous shouts that so delighted us, his violent jerks and gestures, his nervous irritability, his fierce ejaculatory methods of argument, often suspending conversation and sometimes obliterating the would-be participant, were all part of the defensive armament by which he concealed his inward thought and feelings, and even with us he never seemed really able to converse intimately in the natural conversational way in which we could always talk with our mother. My father's mode of address to us invariably gave an impression of artificiality, though this was a mannerism. He would begin to talk as if he was in a temper.

I think the Victorians were a choleric people, at least I can remember quite half a dozen splendid old gentlemen of that period who certainly possessed remarkably quick and fierce tempers. To-day, our object is to eliminate passion, but in those times this was not so. My father was quite characteristic in this respect.

His temper was clearly derived from his father, but it had a quality of its own. His father was a very handsome old man whom I remember with undimmed distinctiveness. One day at Sutton Place I was twisting the arm of my younger brother in imitation of the way in which I had recently had mine twisted by a boy who had come over to play with us, when the older Frederic Harrison stormed into the dining-room and, with a stinging backhander to my face, sent me stumbling against a chair. His rage was intimidating. "You dare to hurt your younger brother!" he shouted. "I didn't!" I yelled. "What! Do you require another?" cried the old man. Whereat I fled, followed by my brother, who was fearful lest more harm should befall me. My grandfather was quite the grand type, and with him one had to "look out." I always thought he regarded my father with immense pride, tinged with melancholy, for "Fred" in those days must have appeared to the pillars of propriety as an almost disreputable character, and I can recall vividly my grandfather's strictures at table when he

thought his son was airing his revolutionary or free-thinking opinions too lightly. My father surprised me on those occasions. He took these paternal strictures with a gracious word of chaff, just as we subsequently took our father's reprimands. It is amusing to recall that my grandfather had witnessed the funeral of Nelson.

My grandfather's temper descended upon his son and took a quite peculiar form, which, though it looked dangerous, was devoid of malice. In my youth boys were usually spanked by their fathers. I can remember only one blow which again well-nigh felled me, and, to my unspeakable humiliation, before the very eyes of a Life Guard. We were crossing the Horse Guards with a charming and beautiful French girl of about twenty when my brother and I started to tease her about the " poor little Zouaves," who looked like dwarfs in comparison with the giant English Life Guards, and suddenly my father, who never could bear any reflections upon France, grew crimson in the face and, running up, hit me a " stinger " on the jaw. I deeply resented this blow in front of France. The French girl was *désolée* and said all kinds of nice things, but my father was really angry. It was the only occasion, so far as " we " were concerned, on which he ever allowed his temper to get the better of him.

My father's irascibility was apt to perturb people not accustomed to it. It would come on suddenly at the most unexpected moments and for no apparent reason whatever. A phrase in a newspaper would cause him literally to shake with wrath. His face would turn purple and his lips quiver, and I have frequently seen people in a railway-carriage cast anxious glances at my father rattling the newspaper with a countenance convulsed with rage. At times this peculiarity was more pronounced than at others, when a word sufficed to start him off. Sometimes these outbreaks would close with a vociferous " Damn ! " when he would become perfectly quiet again until perhaps another phrase in the newspaper attracted his

attention. Travelling with my father was a perpetual anxiety on this score. Extraordinarily punctual, punctilious and scrupulous himself, he seemed to be unable to make any allowance for the race of foreign porters, guards, guides, cabmen, waiters and such like, at whom he would storm and rave and hurl objurations (of a restrained and gentlemanly kind), if the train was ten minutes late, or the meat not tender, or the wheels of the carriage creaked, or his place had not been reserved, until sometimes we feared it would end in a fight with daggers. How we all came through safely from these family excursions abroad, I cannot imagine. Yet I believe my father thoroughly enjoyed these passionate moments except when a thoughtless traveller took his seat in the carriage, when he would lose all command of himself, and, perhaps luckily, of his language. One or two of these incidents almost led to a free fight.

This sub-acute, constant condition of irritability in my father naturally made him a difficult subject, and in one so naturally genial, healthy, sociable and philosophic, so active in interest and just in reflection, the want of self-control betrayed by this chronic testiness and incapacity to check, modify or conceal its distressing and decidedly undignified expression is singular, nor did he ever get over it. Yet I don't think my father was peculiar in this respect. The Victorians rather resembled spoilt children. They had got the ships, they had the men, and they had the gold, too: and they were Puritans. They flew their tempers, like a right or cognizance. Perhaps the fashion came from Wellington, who was reputed to shrivel up men with a glance. The stories about the Duke were legion.

My father was wont to tell a story about himself as a boy at school, which is characteristic. This boy kept on jolting his knee against my father's leg in class time until at last my father pulled out his pen-knife, opened it, held it against his leg, warning the offender of its danger. The story goes on to say that the boy swung his leg and received the point of the knife in his flesh, and, " served him

right, too," my father would say, " he ought to have left me alone." My father's temper really defeated itself so far as we were concerned, for we very early learnt to gauge its significance and to regard it as a kind of peculiar parental privilege which perhaps " did him good." We never could discover. On the whole, I fancy it did ease him. But it was not the real thing. It was not divine wrath, not like that of some men who turn ashen white and become dangerous; my father turned red, and then he would rub his hands together with extraordinary vehemence, making a swishing sound which rose and fell and could be heard all over the house.

He would come upstairs like that, rubbing his hands together in a frenzy. We used to try to imitate it, as boys will, but it is not an easy performance and requires prodigious energy. To reach the pace attained by my father and to produce the volume of sound mounting to a *crescendo* customary with him, demands a terrific display of nervous force, and I doubt if our best performances ever equalled his. I don't recommend the habit, unless one has a good heart. Sometimes he would stop in the middle of such an access as if he had thought better of it, or the cause was insufficient, or he lacked the necessary vitality; it was very queer to witness these incompleted outbreaks, for the trembling of his lips would synchronize absolutely with the movement of his hands, and I have seen him on such occasions stop suddenly, as if conscious of the absurdity of the thing, when his hands would move up and down for a while without touching, then he would laugh.

And it was all over in a minute. His colour would fall, the lips would tighten, and in a flash he was himself again, amenable, accessible, responsive. Yet one never knew. One word, if it happened to be a word awakening his displeasure, would start him off again. We, of course, got to know the dangerous topics and allusions and avoided them. But sometimes one " had to talk." As a boy, I remember these spates of temper interested me profoundly, and I

longed for the day when I should be able to give vent to them; but later on they became too common to excite enthusiasm, and I fancy I sometimes thought it was a pity that my father had never been to a boarding-school.

This peculiarity, which would convulse him perhaps half a dozen times a day and would occur *à propos de bottes* at any hour, on any occasion, and in any place—and it would break out and make him shake with rage when crossing a Swiss glacier, or in a gondola by moonlight at Venice, or on the sunlit peace of a morning in May—and seized him when he was working alone in his room, or when walking by himself on the hillside, and even in the train while on his way to give a lecture, was perhaps an underlying reason of his essentially retiring nature, causing him to shrink from active participation in life. I think he recognized his difficulty which drove him into himself, making him appear a faddist, which he was not, and often unsympathetic when in reality he was a paragon of tenderness. His temper was not anger, it was irritability, and to us it was a faithful barometer warning us of storms. We often lamented his strange loathing of tobacco, which might have been helpful to him, but on this count my father was adamant.

I don't think his father smoked, nor did Ruskin: many sturdy Victorians were like that. They unquestionably held tremendous views which they lived up to. They sanctioned port, but not tobacco; they were meta-Elizabethans, true to iron principles. A man in my youth who rode a bicycle in Scotland on the Sabbath incurred serious physical risk. Everything was pigeon-holed. England was a network of constabulary jurisdiction, and a youth who offended generally had to run away to sea, while the sentence in the case of a girl was enunciated in the stern phrase so beloved in the melodrama of that period, as seen at the old " Adelphi " regarding the " darkening of the door." My father, as a rebel and a heretic, stood between the old wooden absolutism of Puritanism and the new thought of Evolution. A meliorist by nature and pre-

dilection, he stood unequivocally for progress, but on the subject of smoking he never swerved. It was his life's passionate negation.

Tobacco was not only a lifelong aversion, it became a mania, and a man who lighted up in a railway-carriage where my father sat, was assured of a breezy altercation. He was never tired of expatiating upon the "filthy" habit which polluted modern life, and I don't think anyone ever smoked even a cigarette in his house (in his presence) outside the dining-room on occasions, and even then only after he had left it. He would say to his guests, "I suppose you fellows want to make pigs of yourselves, so I will leave you," and walk out. "We" smoked outside, or in some small room—out of the way. He regarded smoking as a vice. It nauseated him physically. My father's fury was eminently and respectfully Victorian.

He could never talk quietly through a telephone, into which he would shout with quick abrupt, staccato sentences, as if he suspected the thing might kick back. All this was manner. At the same time, it was a bit disconcerting until you understood, and no doubt explains why some people regarded him as unsympathetic and were even scared by his virile, downright, emphatic address.

It was this peculiarity that prevented him from being a good conversationist in the French sense, though he was a brilliant speaker. In conversation he was alloquial, not colloquial, and in a family the alloquial method is not conducive to harmony; it made one feel conscious of an "inferiority"—I have seen men almost ludicrously afraid of meeting him in conversation. My father was apt to speak, as the Frenchwoman said to the man monopolizing conversation at table, in the manner of a *conférence* which admitted of no controversy, and it made beginnings difficult. He had the alert aggressiveness of a man who had consistently met with opposition and had come to expect it. His letters home from college reveal the state of his mind as a youth. He found himself alone then, and

challenging. I think he always felt himself somewhat alone and challenging.

I mention these little peculiarities as indications of temperament rather than in their relation to character, for it must not be supposed that my father was a hard man—he was exceptionally tender towards us; or that he was lacking in sympathy—probably few men were ever more personally interested in the welfare of their sons or tried more to assist them. The quality of his hardness and indifferentism was intellectual; it was a growth and, as I have endeavoured to indicate, a mannerism. At the same time, this apparent and acquired indifferentism did exist; it would emerge unexpectedly in different forms, and it did lead to a certain spiritual aloofness and to prejudices which in art were apt to find strange expression. My father was in the position of a man who was an artist by blood and a moralist by conviction, and so there seemed a perpetual war between his emotionalism and his intellectualism, between instinct and his overwhelming moral sense, between the man and his passion.

To a man, such as my father, endowed with rude health, and a rude sanity which was always dominant, compromise was no solution; it became impossible in one who was both spiritually and intellectually emotional. His whole nature was cast on vehement sanguine lines of mental and bodily health, so much so that doubt in his eyes was a weakness, and indifference almost a crime. He "felt" things personally. He could not in the careless cynical way of the modernist say this or that "does not matter." Everything mattered to him, especially all public questions. His habit of writing letters to the Press derived from a temperament which would not allow him to be indifferent. He could not "switch off," so to speak, and say, "This is no business of mine." Here we see the reformer's passion. Yet his very passion was altruistic, for which reason it was, of course, misunderstood. It gave him magnificent enthusiasms, it also involved him in not a few controversies.

Perhaps that is what Ruskin implied when he twitted him with knowing nothing "about good traceries," though assuredly my father got it back on him when he proved that Ruskin's attack upon the word "positive" was based on ignorance of French. My father, anyway, was not a sensitive plant, though he knew an amazing lot about traceries and political economy too. The quality of his brain was rigidly three-dimensional. My father's temper, I can see now, was partly the consequence of his Positivism, and I can readily understand the irritation caused by a position which people refused to take quite seriously. It is, of course, profoundly annoying to find oneself always "in the wrong," for even a philosopher likes to feel that he is occasionally right. And, in reality, my father was a Carlyle-ite; he was a hero-worshipper, and he venerated many of the men who consistently belittled his religious "master." That is why he never really was "one of them." For instance, he was left out of the "Souls," or club, which Margot Asquith (Lady Oxford) has described so amusingly in her reminiscences, though many of its members were close friends of his, in particular Wilfrid Blunt. He belonged to Comte, and so he was continually obliged to defend Comte; and this abstraction alienated him from many of the movements of his time with which otherwise he would have been associated. He was extraordinarily fond of Wilfrid Blunt, though I don't think he quite entered into the spirit of the parties given by his friend, which were more Bohemian than my father cared for, and I have heard Blunt chaff him about Comte.

Thus my father was always on his guard. I once asked him how he motived his hero-worship of England's Protestant "Constable" with Comte's Catholicism, and instinctively he flared up, thinking I was "pulling his leg." This sort of thing made conversation difficult. It affected him because he was absolutely serious in his mind and never could temper a conviction, and it was acutely troubling to him to live in a constant atmosphere of "suspicion." Yet this chronic vexatiousness rarely

disturbed his judgment. He could dislike a man personally and yet rightly appraise him. Morally, he was completely balanced, and much as he objected to Oscar Wilde's æstheticisms and still more to the man himself, he spoke concernedly about him and was deeply impressed by his "Ballad of Reading Gaol." Few men ever appealed to my father for help and sympathy in vain. The fact is that he was so bursting with enthusiasms and so anxious to serve that the slight frustration clamping him as Positivist was an unceasing source of annoyance and made him fretful. Yet he was incapable of harshness. He hated cruelty, and he disliked all sport that involved killing for that reason. He never could whip even Grip, the dog, and nothing was more comic than to see my father try to inflict punishment upon that animal lying on its back with its head on one side. "Little Devil!" my father would exclaim, "he knows I can't hit him."

So he seemed to me as a boy, the last man in the world to be a philosopher, an æsthete, a grammarian, or pundit; he who was as keen as paint about sport and the things boys love, who looked so red and hale and sound without any of the affectation or sadness or mistiness or picturesqueness usually associated with the artist type (and I had seen a few, too, in our home—Holmes, the fiddler, with his immense bush of golden locks in imitation, as I thought, of Shock-headed Peter in the story-book; great "Yoko," like a gentle lion, and many more, including Herbert Spencer). I think this bluffness of my father rather annoyed some people, and it certainly "drew" Ruskin; and I remember a master at school saying to me after my father had come down for the day, "I was so surprised to see your father: I had always imagined him to be a stern, bent man with glasses. He looks like the Vicar of Bray." He did rather, and he felt that way. He even wrote like that, in a bold, legible and scholarly hand, and hardly ever corrected a word.

I remember how amazed my father was with George Gissing after a long walk they had taken together on the

hills. " He is a botanist," he told us subsequently, " knows the name of every fern and wild flower." He could not understand this scientific interest in the novelist. And yet my father enjoyed his walk quite as much as Gissing. His enthusiasm for mountains, clouds and sunsets was intense, only he saw them differently. He was not interested in the detail, he saw things as a whole. His impressionism was intellectual, not sentient. He also would recite Homer to Gissing on the heath, but it was not the sheer emotionalism of Gissing, who would suddenly stop and vomit out the words; my father's memory was not of that order and he could not " let himself go " out of boisterous love of a great language. He did not examine causes and motives like Gissing, whose intricate, filigree, trained and receptive mind was almost as much astonished at the buoyant, learned and spacious republicanism of my father.

Gissing, who wrote about men and women, knew much about the detail of nature; my father, who wrote about the works of men and women, knew little scientifically about flowers and Nature, and yet I believe my father saw more and enjoyed what he saw more: the two men were entirely dissimilar. In Gissing's eyes the world was ever present with its unceasing and devastating waste; my father felt only the pulse of construction, saw only the blue of the sky bursting through the clouds, and between them their rapture was competitive, conjectural, and somewhat discordant. My father would catch the whispers of the hills and happy greenwood, but he could not interpret them and did not want to; and in similar fashion he would catch the whispers of human nature and pass by, content to fulfil his own office. This is the explanation of his indifferentism. His course was so single and its promise so defined that he became unobservant of the sprays and florets by the wayside, and it made him seem hard and perhaps incomplete, incomplete in the sense that he often would not, as a fact he did not, permit himself to see the other side; and as a youngster this stern eclectism distressed me considerably, especially in the case of Gissing,

whose " helplessness " was so pathetic. We never knew whether our father's prejudices and taboos were real or not, for boys look with suspicion upon prejudices. I think now they were. He dispensed his disfavours liberally, and I would positively quake when I heard my father chide Gissing for his " delight," which by the way was perfectly true, in portraying the nether world when life was so full of beauty and happiness. Gissing, the pessimist, would hang his head and look the image of despair, and then his laughing eyes would twinkle, and with his spontaneous and delightful burst of laughter, so characteristic of his attitude towards the people he drew and the life they lived, and he hated their squalor as much as their victimization, he would cry, " But we must know or we shall never remedy these atrocious (his favourite word) abominations ! Someone, I say, must speak out and tell the truth."

My father was for Dickens, and the innovating Russianism of Gissing disconcerted him. He would then pause and continue his lunch. He was evidently thinking. " But not all the time," he would say after a pause. " It isn't necessary to soak us in gloom and squalor all the time." Then again Gissing would shout with laughter, for this was his point and his very reason as writer. " It is necessary," he would say. " Pickwick is only the fun and spangle of England. We want its sorrow. We want the other side as well. How will religion rectify that ? "

That, of course, was the difficulty. My father did not encourage the " other side." The Victorians did not make things easy for the lonely pathfinder, as Kingsley found, who was regarded very much as we regard Mr. Smillie to-day. Intolerance was the rule. My father's full-stops were notorious. The thunderbolt of morality is a shattering weapon. My father came dangerously near in judging fiction to the astigmatism of Mrs. Grundy, and must, I hold, be classed in this respect as a Victorian. I never knew him to read a detective novel, and he never tired of repeating the story of how he had one day in Switzerland

asked John Morley to take a turn on the glacier with him, and the man who had once " spelt the Deity with a small 'd' " had declined, pleading that he " must finish this detestably clever detective story." That was a point of view my father could not understand.

This is what I mean by " incomplete "—my father did not allow himself to be complete. From the hour that he decided not to enter the Church, still more from the day of his interview in 1855 with Auguste Comte, which changed and decided his life, he thought and acted under a vowed restraint of principle and purpose, which shut him off from the fulness of perceived life and of its fruition. It was no doubt incumbent upon him to take such a step, both in his own interests and that of his belief, since either he had to break the opposition or the opposition would break him. But in Art it is the function of the artist to blow down the walls of prejudice, not to erect them, and in my youth I found the literary and art stockades of my father, which admitted of no discussion and bristled around him, to be somewhat incompatible with the theory, in which he agreed, that art is a criticism of life, if life itself was to be divided into permit zones of *verboten*, on lines such as my father delighted to describe as " the military paste of the German professor."

This temperamental attitude was always present with him and one never knew when the door would not be slammed to. I believe it was a strain upon him and was even a contributory cause of much of his chronic irritability. He felt he was not free, not intellectually free. He insulated his mind. The struggle between the moralist and the artist must have been deep and constant. It is comparatively easy to retire into a monastery and abdicate; it is not easy for a full-blooded man with deep and multifarious enthusiasms, who feels himself to be a creator and compelled for the very preservation of mental health to write, to fence himself in behind a network of moral reservations which must, it would seem, clash with the divergent and not always compatible demands of art

expression and repression. Thus, like many men of his time, my father distrusted the stage; he loathed the music-hall; he looked upon musical comedy as Ruskin looked upon the forty thieves in the pantomime, who, to his astonishment, were " girls and smoked cigars," with the prejudice of Puritanical tradition.

No two men were more temperamentally different than my father and Lord Morley, and it was always a joy to me to watch them. My father was all contention, a *sabreur* in thought; Lord Morley was the lofty spirit of compromise. The more pontifically my father soared, the more dissolvent and dubious would his friend appear. An argument between them was like a contest between night and day. In " russet mantle " my father would shake the profundities, but Lord Morley was economic with adjectives, and constitutionally chary of generalizations. His brow would dome and his lips curl. " Well ! well ! " he would say, " I envy you your turmoil. You are like a tankard of old sack."

I must add that I think my father usually won these salacious bouts, which became rarer and rarer after Lord Morley's elevation to the Peerage, when the old knot which had united them for so long seemed to slip and to disclose a hiatus—of fibre and moral character.

Chapter VII

FAITH

IN the year 1849 some pretty lively young students forgathered at Oxford, drawn together by a new interpretation of history, among whom was my father, then eighteen, who had " gone up " with the idea of taking orders, as in those days was expected of the scholarly son of an honest and well-to-do citizen. But my father's scholarship was not of the nature of divinity. Even before he left school, he declares that he " had already lost all faith in the theological traditions " of the University and had little reverence for the " schools " or for the Warden's counsels to cultivate a " godly disposition." This truculence, of course, was disappointing to his parents, for my father's career was brilliant, so brilliant that to a youth so socially serious, so religious, so classically ablaze, a headmastership and the cherished gaiters of a Bishop seemed the predestined consummation.

But my father was alight in other directions and needed more than a submissive faith or public distinction; his intelligence was of the raking, questing order, and he had a conscience and above that he had a leaping and rebellious spirituality which had begun to discount. At first, he is homesick and writes home sad letters to his father, for his soul is troubled and he can find no comfort or inspiration in athletics, or mere obscurantism. But this is only a phase. He soon falls under the influence of Dr. Congreve, who had begun to teach history on Positivist principles, though studiously avoiding all reference to

Comte, and my father listens greedily. Others listen. Young Oxford is interested in this Dr. Congreve and his synthetic views of history, and before long my father is a disciple. He forms a group of stalwarts—G. S. Beesly, subsequently to be professor, tall, leonine and courtly; J. H. Bridges, short, spruce and challenging; G. C. Thorley and others—and these ardent youths come to conclusions which are to be historical. They breakfast and decide that they have no affinity with "supernatural" beliefs; they suspect that Dr. Congreve is talking Positivism, a strange and cryptic creed from France; they attract the notice of tutors and of the redoubtable Dr. Jowett, and they even influence tutors, and they become in turn noticed, marked and maligned, so that the head of the opposition which, as usual, is the conventional majority, calls them "Mumbo-Jumbo" or idol-worshippers, though it is not clear whether the attentions of the rowdy set or "Hayers," who defended the Church, partook of a physical nature.

Anyhow, my father's prospective clerical career ends abruptly. He plays cricket and he reads, above all, he discusses. He becomes the leader of this Oxford group. Dr. Congreve singles him out, and he is regarded as a wild, heretic, half-Irishman, who may "do things." He does do things. He becomes tutor, then Fellow, and for two years he reads, and rakes the Union Library for books on history, philosophy, religion. He leaves Oxford a "republican, a democrat and a free-thinker"—three pretty desperate states of mind in those days for a respectable young man—and he "goes to the Bar," but it is not his *métier* and not his interest. The words of Congreve burn in his mind and he decides to go to the source and see this "mystery" Frenchman—this Comte whom no man knows, yet whose message has begun to shake the foundation of England. He crosses over to Paris and has a long interview with Auguste Comte, from which he returns a new man. He is then twenty-four. But his soul is still ravenous. He reads the Bible for "sheer pleasure,"

he loves churches and the Magdalen Chapel services afford him " æsthetic delight." Clearly, such a man is no Atheist, no heretic, no " blasphemer." A long period of moral gestation follows on his visit to Comte. If he has found salvation, he has to make up his mind on fundamentals, for he is the kind who cannot be happy without fundamentals. He must know; at the same time he must *believe*, and the equation for this rhapsodical harmony presents grave difficulties in one whose mind is scientific, yet who rejoices in the sanctity of cathedrals. He must have been not unlike Bunyan's " Pilgrim " at that time, seeking grace. For though, after 1853, he was free on the theoretical side, he was not whole; he was not convinced. His spirit needed confirmation.

None the less, this date is the crucial landmark in his life, and his life is perhaps unusually subdivisible into perfectly clear and sequent stages, each constituting a progressive development, of which the next occurred in 1861, when at the age of thirty he decided to devote himself to the practical application of Comte's sociology, though still only theoretically; and the next in 1870, when, as a declared Positivist, he married—" the best and happiest day of my life," as he wrote retrospectively in 1910—which ended his long term of doubt to be broken, so to speak, only by the last definite act of withdrawal from worldly activity and the devotion henceforth of his energies to literature and religion. These breaks or stages are characteristic of his deliberateness, and of his emotional nature. The boy scholar matures at Oxford into the student of religious philosophy, to reject as a young man, though comfortably situated and with manifold prizes and prospects opening before him, the vanities of the world for the soulful consciousness of his own peace which he discovers in the sociology of Comte.

That, of course, is the explanation of the monastic ascetism of his youth. He felt so profoundly the inner call of religion that he could see no likelihood of a happy marriage, and, characteristically, he decided not only that

it would be wrong in the circumstances for him to attempt it, but that it would be socially "unjust" to ask any woman, who did not share his heterodox beliefs and was not prepared to adopt them and risk the consequences, to marry him.

This social ascetism gives the measure of his moral convictions and of his natural sympathy with a religion, the cardinal aim of which lies in the victory of social sympathy over self-love. It is noteworthy that my father clearly felt like that as a boy long before he had heard of Comte, and I think his lack of ambition, his aversion to push himself forward or take any part in the scramble for place and honour, may largely be attributed to this religious sense, this social shrinkage, which made itself marked when he was still in his teens at the University, which hampered and discomfited him as a barrister in London, and which on the solitary occasion when he was induced to enter politics, caused him to be the most retiring and perhaps the most impersonal candidate that ever sought a seat in Parliament. All form of competition was distasteful to him, so much so that but for the practical object of Humanism, which lies in the subordination of politics to morals, it may be questioned whether he would have taken the active part he did in public affairs in the years before his marriage; and he has himself described how doubtful he felt about any attempt to establish a Positivist centre and how he only consented with grave misgiving.

Auguste Comte himself was an idealist and a genius, who thought too rapidly, too logically for practical statesmanship, and, like most idealists, had but an imperfect notion of the manifold snares and pitfalls of "real" politics. He had the visionary's temperament. But there are no automatic results in politics, and it must be admitted that he gravely undervalued the cumbersome march of progress and the conflicting eddies and confusions that stem the tide of human evolution. My father, on the other hand, with his cool, judicial mind, was

neither then, nor at any time, under any illusions as to the stupendous practical difficulties facing the establishment of a systematic governance of religion as propounded by the French philosopher. Even in 1862 he writes in his diary (republished in the Autobiography) that he can see " no need now of a separate church," and he is sceptical of any attempt to form a " social union on an adequate scale "; and he adds: " Positivism as yet can only be *education*. A John the Baptist may be needed to prepare. We are not yet ready for a Christ."

None the less, rather than impede the foundation of the movement, my father acquiesced and a separate Church was formed later, as he has described. To understand my father's public activities it is essential to grasp how intimately his mind worked with the behests of Positivism. I cannot but think that it was chiefly due to this influence that his attention was directed towards Trades Unionism, where he and Professor Beesly in those days did brave pioneer work which was generally regarded as revolutionary. In Comte's thesis the proletariat was destined to play a conspicuous part in the work of human regeneration as the social representative of " power "; and at that time in France the Revolution was still the governing principle of thought, also a great deal was being said about Communism, which was eventually to be " shot up " across the barricades of Paris. Rousseau still " lived " in the France of that period and all Europe was aflame with regenerating sentiment. But in Victorian England, Comte and the new sociology were almost unknown, and my father's bold and decisive intervention on behalf of the Unions was viewed with consternation by his own class, not only as an innovation, but as a precedent. Thus, in mid-career, he found himself a " marked " man at the Bar, though perhaps not fatally so. It opened without a doubt a political career, had he then chosen to embark upon such a course and—lead " Labour." Anything might have happened, for my father was bursting with religious feeling and stood in considerable danger of

applying specifically French (Comtist) ideas to English conditions, which were totally different, and the air still quivered with the movement of '48. He might have become a religious revolutionary, branded and martyred —Professor Beesly only just escaped such a fate. But philosophic balance saved him from political notoriety, for his politics were in reality purely religious humanitarianism, and quite distinct from Mill's utilitarianism. They had nothing to do with making a " career." He never thought of his own prospects, and when he took up his stand on behalf of Trades Unionism, he was no more a Socialist than was the late Keir Hardie a Tory. His politics were always an intellectual religious emotion.

It was at this juncture that he married and began a new life. How curiously French he was in thought is revealed in a letter which he wrote to Professor Beesly (1862): " The intimate alliance foretold by Comte between philosophers and the proletariat has undoubtedly commenced "; this shows his feeling, though it is odd to reflect that my father was thus moved *à propos* of a lecture by Professor Huxley in the Jermyn Street Institution. My father was somewhat " far out " in that opinion. A little later, after a holiday in the Alps, he writes with more composure: " How I seem to have been transported into a new world and to have forgotten the everyday life altogether ! . . . In the meantime, I am more ready for *something to do*." That was the most active period of his life. He wrote passionate appeals in the *Beehive* on behalf of France and of Poland—Poland figured prominently in Comte's polity—and of Japan in connection with the bombardment of Kagosina; and during the years 1867-68-69 he was absorbed by his work on the Royal Commission on Trades Unions, which ended in his winning a striking victory, establishing the legal status of Trades Unionism and making repressive legislation " impossible." Ireland, too, occupied his political attention. In that decade my father was a public fighting man who, though he had staunch friends, such as Lord Thring, on

the above-mentioned Commission, was viewed with dubious admiration clearly illustrated in the hot-headed letter written by my father (1867) in defence of Professor Beesly, whom it was actually proposed to expel from the Headship of University College on the ground of " subversive " agitation. It is difficult for the modern generation to realize the intolerance and bigotry of that time.

But quiet was to come—in marriage, from which clearly-defined demarcation may be said to begin the philosophical period of my father's life when he was to find in the organon of Comte's religious duty of life his supreme happiness and vocation. All his career up to that decisive point was, as he himself has said, " probationary and formative," a period of active and spiritual discovery, when he was hesitating between the world and the spirit, doubtful how to use and express his energies and enthusiasms, whether to plunge actively into politics, or to take up the cause of labour and the service of man, and in any case how to combine and harmonize such active usefulness with the spiritual philosophy of a mind which was necessarily passive and far more adapted to the study than to the egotism of public advancement.

The change that ensued in my father's career as the result of his marriage and of the decisions which may truly be regarded as its consequence, was vital and lasting, enabling him to gain, or perhaps regain, the spiritual peace he sought and needed, and the creativeness that until that time had lain, half-smothered and fomenting, under the tempestuous process of his methodical, slow and conscientious incubation. Until he married, my father had not written books, though in the decade 1861-71, he was a constant and fierce publicist contributing to the *Beehive* and the *Fortnightly Review* under John Morley, the old *Westminster Review* and elsewhere, but, with the exception of as essay published in book form in 1862 on " The Meaning of History," and two translations of Comte's works which appeared in 1875, he had produced no book until in 1886, at the age of 55, he wrote " The

Choice of Books." I can well recall that period, nor shall I ever forget him as he came into the room one afternoon when I was sitting with my mother, and exclaimed: " I'm free now. Henceforth I shall write books."

The declaration seemed to me a terrific one at the time, involving I knew not what, and I could see from the strained silence that followed that something grave and perhaps apprehensive had happened. I remember asking why he was going to write books, and my mother told me he had met with difficulties in his profession owing to his fight on behalf of Trades Unionism, and that it was much better that he should write instead of running his head against the stone walls of convention, and how glad she was that at last he was free to devote himself to the true business of his life, which was art and religion; and I know at the time I felt very happy about it. This was his last stage, the saturation-point in his life, and from that moment books poured from his brain, nor was he ever so happy as with pen in his hand, and he wrote all through his life with exactly the same kind of pen obtained from the same maker, writing his daily morning's quota, never more or less, hardly hesitating and rarely correcting, with the regularity of a time-piece.

My father was thus well over fifty before he can be said to have begun to write; in fact, his creative life commenced at an age when most men are looking forward to retirement. Undoubtedly the cause of this long probation, this fitfulness and almost desultory activity, is to be sought in religion and the inner workings of conscience. He often said that he could not have married any woman but my mother, and I believe this to be so. As a young man, he did not " fall in love," like other young men. He told me himself that he had taken a vow to live purely and so had many of his associates, and that he had steeled himself against temptation. Till he was forty, he was a wanderer, seeking spiritual harmony, driven forward by his own impetuosity, yet unable to concentrate upon any one line and always driven back upon his own purpose,

which for that very reason was unable to assume definite shape. Twenty years of religious turmoil is a long span, and during that time my father seems to have been caught in between the two fires of thought and of action. Literature was not then his first interest by any means. His passion lay in the performance of humanity. The remarkably decisive and clear-thoughted boy takes twenty years to mature, during which time he is " lost " to himself; that is to say, he cannot take wing and utilize his creative powers. He is too replete, too laden with his own intensity. His religious emotionalism chokes the man.

In his heyday, it is clear that my father stifled in the whirlwind of conflicting religious opinion. At twenty-six, he complains that he is utterly sick of " public things," and on his thirtieth birthday he writes of " this very melancholy day with me. I am getting awfully old. Three decades of years come to nothing, and if I died to-morrow I could have no other epitaph than ' vixit annos xxx.' " From twenty to forty, he was seeking a philosophy of life, and seeking a religion to interpret it. A religion, he writes in his note-book, must be applicable to life, and he scoured the books of the past to find one. This clash between his extraordinary physical activity and his slow intellectual momentum without a doubt retarded and frustrated his development, and it is hardly surprising that Ruskin wrote to him: " You are the strangest mystery to me of all the men I know in this world." To the Agnostics he must have caused considerable anxiety, and to his friends he must have seemed a queer mixture of cantankerous religiosity. Even at thirty-five, he still hesitated, still uncertain of his own purpose, still longing to know his way, and he plunged into this and that with feverish eagerness out of sheer moral exhilaration. He lacked the quiet of the philosopher. To a man so scrupulous and ardent, religion was the only career.

Between this emotionalism and the fabric of his piercing, illuminating, practical intelligence, he could find no solace in mere negationalism, the absoluteness of

which was constitutionally repugnant to him; nor could the scintillating logic of the metaphysicians with their bleak, and to him unsatisfying, "omniscience" offer much in the manner of inspiration to one who so essentially needed belief. If my father's nature demanded law and order and arrangement, it also demanded feeling. He had quitted theology by virtue of reason, he could find no compensation in the cold glitter of metaphysics which ignored feeling. He could not be just an unbeliever any more than he could be a quietist, and he was no Faust who, having exhausted the gambit of mortal limitations, could turn for sustenance to the spirit of eternal negation: his sense was too social, his intelligence too rational, his soul too vivid and impersonal for detached self-sufficiency or mere speculative insulation. To an emotional ethicist such as my father, rationalism provides no consolation. Both mind and soul had to be requisitioned. Caught between reason and rapture, he yet could not compromise. He had to "believe." He was in this sense quite un-Greek. Thus, my father turned resolutely and instinctively towards the synthetic social science of Comte, which offered him emotional application.

He found in it what his serious universal sense demanded —a religion of philosophy and a religion of the heart; a synthesis of life capable of practical demonstration, a system correlating the intellectual faculties with the social sympathies of man, a creed applicable and evolutionary, which was at once a science and an earthly inspiration. It had no laws or sacraments, or ceremonies or priests, it had no temples or thuribles. In the Positivist motto, *Love*, *Order*, *Progress*, my father had no illusions to shed, no theories to unlearn, no vows to recant; and they took the place of the more subtle precepts—Faith, Hope and Charity, which, in a world growing ever more practical, leave so much to the imagination.

It was as if he were born into Positivism. Thoughts, Feelings and Actions were all embraced in this organic system. It proclaimed philosophy and politics as the two

principal functions of the social organism. It raised morality into the foreground, as the correlating and integrating fount of action. And in its appeal to the speculative, affective and practical thoughts and services of mankind, it formed a whole so stupendous and imaginative, so scientific and irresistible in its cosmic comprehensiveness of the family as the unit of all the civilized families of the world, that every instinct in my father responded, to the complete and utter dissolution of all other worldly claims or advantages.

This is the key of his life. Behind and always overriding my father's activities, whether social, political, philosophical, historical, literary or æsthetic, his religious sense, acting as the servitor and interpreter of the Humanist system, absorbed him to such an extent that it is wellnigh impossible to decide either when or to what extent the individual can be distinguished from his faith. My father's life was Humanism. It explains his work, his enthusiasms, his concessions, and his negations.

As already mentioned, he embarked on the scheme of establishing a group or sect at Newton Hall reluctantly, feeling that it was " premature," being himself diffident and unambitious, and acutely conscious of the perhaps invidious position in which he might find himself as the leader of a system of thought and conduct not understood at the time and inevitably doomed to misconstruction. It was this conscientiousness, too, which diverted him from literary specialization, which kept him from political Party association, which sundered him from the vanities of the world, which would not permit him to take an objective view of life and of men and their works, which caused him to refuse all compromise with his own labours as thinker, author, teacher and preacher, which made him seem at times unpractical, indifferent, censorious and even unsympathetic; which, in a word, disconnected him from participation.

His likes and dislikes, his literary and æsthetic criteria, strictures and tabulations, his seeming inconsequence—

such, for instance, as frequently led him to attack Liberalism—his Labour-Conservatism, and what must often have appeared to outsiders to be a somewhat capricious and truant individualism, all these expressions and vagaries were the outcome of his religious convictions, though no doubt coloured by a temperament which was strongly and ineradicably egotistic. Positivism is in its very essence individualist, and, strange though this may appear to many people led astray by a French word which signifies the converse of its meaning in our language, its whole basis is *relativity*, or the very opposite of the absolute, thus according considerable latitude to its interpreter, which my father made wide use of. Yet it is extremely difficult to see exactly where the man began and Positivism ended.

Such was my father's difficult and somewhat fastidious position as a man of letters. Placing before all things moral service, he refused artistic liberty, in that always he set moral values above art values, and it was this consideration that so impelled him towards the writings of Ruskin and of all the "great Victorians," with whose moral code he felt in spiritual harmony. Thus he refused to be a conduit either of art specialization or of art freedom, in which spirit he was a Puritan. He shared the Puritan's negatives and not a few of his thunderbolts, yet always in a big, open, slashing and healthy way. The immitigable offence in his eyes was sex. This is, of course, our Island specific as the heritage of individualism that took root from the excommunication of Henry VIII, and was reconsecrated under Puritanism. Applied to fiction, such an enforced narrowing of the field of survey is necessarily constrictive, and it deprived my father of the full use of the oceanic qualities of mind that he undoubtedly possessed, making him often appear unduly pedantic and sometimes jaundiced towards writers whom on purely moral grounds he felt he ought not to and could not support.

As a youth, I sometimes found my father's idealism decidedly difficult, and indeed exasperating, and once we

had a regular clash which settled my interpretations for many a day. I determined to "sound" him on the question of social morality which had begun to interest me, as is often the way with young men, for I could descry little wisdom or logic in a system which tolerated the singular discrepancies in moral values which I saw around me. For a long while I considered my plan, and at last one morning I felt quixotic and solemnly entered his library, told him I had something to ask him, and sat down.

I began by asking him whether it was immoral to fall in love, at which question my father looked up in evident consternation.

"You don't mean," he said, "that you are engaged? That would be too silly."

I shook my head.

"Worse," I said.

My father now seemed anxious. He put down his pen, sat back in his chair and surveyed me.

"Worse!" he exclaimed. "You're not married, are you?"

This seemed to me a facetiousness, which eased the tension, and I laughed.

"It's not that at all," I began. "I'm speaking generally."

My father smiled, too, at that and seemed relieved.

"What is it you do mean?" he said.

I felt now that the great moment had come. Yet I was not intimidated. I thought his justice and philosophy would enable him to see my case, and without further ado I spoke out.

"I mean, what is a fellow to do who cannot marry and falls in love?"

At these words my father bounded up and moved across to the fireplace. He looked grave and perplexed.

"Do!" he cried. "Do what every gentleman does in such circumstances. Do what your religion teaches you. Do what morality prescribes as right."

But this hardly appeared to me fair. I went on undaunted.

"And suppose one cannot live up to such high precepts?"

My father was now getting angry.

"You know my views," he said. "A man who cannot learn self-control is a cad. What more can I say?"

Again I was dissatisfied. I wanted to talk. I wanted to hear what he really thought about this problem. I knew the "don'ts." We had plenty of don'ts at school, and I was beginning to question their utility. I pressed him closer.

"There must be a frightful lot of cads," I ejaculated.

"There are," responded my father.

"Is that all?" I asked, after a pause.

"It is enough," said my father. "You know the difference between good and evil."

"But is it evil?" I interrupted. "I mean, is love only right in marriage?"

"Certainly. A loose man is a foul man. He is anti-social. He is a beast."

I considered this declaration in painful silence.

"Positivism, then, takes the theological view about morality?"

"Of course," said my father. "Even more so. Continence is a matter of personal pride. A man who gives way to the flesh is a wrong-doer. I regard vice with contempt. You know that. Why do you ask?"

I could see that I was not going to get very far with an argument which ran up against stern negatives.

"There must be something else," I said, "beyond mere schoolboy restrictions which the world does not follow. I wanted to know what you . . ."

My father sat down hastily and cut in.

"I don't follow you," he said, "and I cannot listen to schoolboy chatter about a subject so clear in itself, which admits of no controversy. Every man has to square his own conscience. Morality cannot be twisted about to suit

people's tastes. I am really astonished you should even propose such a thing."

"I don't propose," I rejoined. "I merely ask for advice."

"I have told you," said my father.

"I see," said I. "It's no good talking to you."

"It is not a subject I can discuss," he replied. "It is not a subject that decent men do discuss."

My father thereupon read me a lecture on social conduct to which I listened with edified attention. I was both relieved and distressed. I had hoped to have a deep talk about this problem. I found that we could not discuss the subject. None the less, his bearing impressed me. He had listened. He was not fussy and I could see that he spoke with unfeigned sincerity. Still, I was conscious of a gulf that had now arisen between us, and was not likely to be crossed, and it never was. We never alluded to such problems again, and I remember how odd I thought it that religion was merely a schoolmaster and had nothing to offer beyond a formal negation.

My father's intellectual and temperamental make-up qualified him in so specific and comprehensive a way to act the sociology of Comte that its precepts became instinctive with him, submerging his own predilections and proclivities and to some extent his own faculties. And he was utterly devoid of hypocrisy. He could not dissemble. He invariably "gave himself away." He could not preach what he did not himself live up to any more than he could write at any time what he did not mean. This attitude is to-day apt to be sneered at as lacking in "humour." With him, religion meant example, a living morality, and it was this ascetic call of individualization that so attracted him to Comte. Humanism did not mean a doctrine which applied in a "practical" world only on one day in the week; its application with him was continuous, relevant and relative to everything, permeable through all forms of human activity.

I was always clearly conscious of this difference between the man and his religion, perhaps because of the

contrast. I think his inveterate habit of writing letters was one of his temperamental outlets, for he always began his work with letters, as if to " write himself in." Walking was another. He preferred to walk alone. And when as a small boy I worked at home in the dining-room, he would rush out perhaps a dozen times during the morning and " stampede " us, not that he had anything to say, though sometimes he had when he saw blots on the paper or his eye caught some grammatical mistake in my Latin, but rather to relieve his feelings, or perhaps to get a fresh idea. These excursions and alarums were just symptoms of vitality which I appraised as natural phenomena. I could see that he had to give vent to his feelings. Dashing in upon us at lesson-time and dashing out again appeared to refresh him. It made me pretty careful how I behaved in the passage, which became a sort of running " Tom Tiddler's ground." With the thoughtlessness of a boy I used sometimes to wonder why it was that a theory of life so engrossed a man, and how it was that he became so devout a votary ? Youth likes to be able to fasten on visible things. I saw no visible altar. And yet I perceived that my father drew strength and inspiration from his religion, and I was puzzled, for the Positivist precept, " Live for others," is hardly a boy's injunction. I have met grown-up people since who share my boyish perplexity. Yet as we grew up and were able to think more clearly, we saw nothing strange in our father's attitude, so natural and inevitable did his moral tone appear, and so suitable in one so glad. There was no effort. The serenity was felt, the atmosphere was normal, the gauge of intensity was level and constant. We who had no divinity at least had no mortifications. His religion, we divined, lay not in semblance or in any cryptic adoration, but in the world about him, in the acting of his own thoughts, in the consistency of his purpose, in the pertinence of the home.

All which seemed simple enough and unprovocative, though we may not have caught its fervour, even when

later on my brother spoke to me of its lack of " rhapsody," which appeared to me a just criticism. Still we perceived the man who was rhapsodical, and to me that was sufficient. I stood firmly on his side. We suspected, we surmized, we understood that his devotion was not quite like ours, not assessable as we should have liked it, but I saw nothing odd or questionable in that. Why should I ? The man was all-apparent, and youth is susceptible to the consistent gesture. At least I had no doubts. He wore his thoughts lightly, and he was too splendidly healthy to be misunderstood. Even in my utterly heathen years I looked upon him with eyes of glory, if I occasionally thought the world a trying place for those who lacked it. In the home, personality creates its own difficulties, and these were not wanting. But life was exuberantly sane, and whatever soul-torments my father underwent, and in his early manhood he must have had many lonely struggles with the madness of conscience, as a father he was the essence of spontaneity and unalterable cheerfulness, and I doubt if in the whole course of his married life he ever had an hour of melancholy. Never was a contrite heart more reposeful. My father's Faith was rude and splendidly Western, European and modern. It owed nothing to prayer or incantation. His peace sprang neither from exaltation nor from humility, but from within. He needed no ecstasy and practised no mortification. He had no sin and he had no God.

It is strange to think that Western civilization has not founded a Western religion, and that up to the time of Comte Europe had evolved no practical science of morality other than that adopted from the East which is the fount of all the religions. The " mystic " sense is the one gift of the East which the West has assimilated, and it would seem the only Oriental contribution to mankind likely now to be transplanted in conditions of thought and knowledge that have grown so culturally, æsthetically, scientifically and morally unequal and incompatible. It is indeed queer that Europe with its moving knowledge

still follows the mystic lamp of the East in what is called religion, since it acknowledges no other Oriental contribution to exact thought, and has fought about the matter of interpretation ever since. My father was one of the spirits of an age that sought to establish a Western system of moral values on the basis of its own coherent and social spirituality, though he neither belonged quite to its spirit nor to its valuation. If he was wholly un-Eastern in his rationalism, which could dispense so happily and harmoniously with mysticism, he had the emotionalism of universal man who is not solely satisfied with reason. He did not demand suspense, yet he craved for spiritual satisfaction.

When he summed up his stewardship of Newton Hall in 1902, he wrote: " We warmly repudiate the arid creed of Atheism; and even Agnosticism seems to us but a barren negation of which we need not be proud." This is a categorical statement of the Positivist position which stops at the demonstrable and comprehensible, in fact, where man usually does not want to stop. Here, we have an explanation of my father's characteristic cautiousness. He sternly trained himself to eliminate, yet even as he shut out mystery he may be said to appear somewhat mysterious, as indeed is inevitable in a world of the impalpable and of the undisclosed. Though he himself was almost strangely free from supernatural beliefs and inclinations, his attitude towards such things was so tolerant as to seem almost sympathetic, and no man was ever more sincerely interested in those who did entertain such beliefs and were susceptible to superstitious forms of devotion. He shared George Eliot's spirit of tolerance towards all Churches, and thus characteristically attacked the Stephens in 1870 in an article called " The Religion of Inhumanity," which in spirit might well have been written by an enlightened ecclesiastic, Protestant or Catholic. He was distinctly susceptible to the mystic catholicism of the Middle Ages, which proclivity again emanates from Comte and it also profoundly influenced

George Eliot; and this reverential side of him, which my mother shared and perhaps emphasized, always appeared to me to contrast with his own clarity of vision and that untroubled exuberance which characterized everything he wrote and thought.

Of all the Agnostics of the Victorian age, he was, I suppose, the most philosophically Christian in spirit and guiding motive. He had something of the spirit that "always denies," yet himself wholly unmetaphysical and untheological. I used to speculate about his convictions with considerable curiosity. Now he would seem to me like an Orangeman with drum and fife celebrating the Battle of the Boyne; now he would wring the historian, Froude, by the neck for his Protestant bias; and, again, he would seem to me to be walking round the cloisters of some ancient monastery arm in arm with a venerable cardinal of Rome. This, of course, is the difficulty presented by Positivism—there is no Absolute, hence there is no absolutism, thus distinguishing it from all other religions, and a man is thrown on his own judgment as regards the standards of earthly jurisdiction.

It was here that Positivism exactly met the complex spiritual and intellectual requirements of my father, epitomized in a religious interpretation of history. To a man so mentally free from superstitious tendency, so intellectually equipped for study and laborious thought and yet so temperamentally hungry of belief and gesture, the sociology of Comte provided, both in thought and spirit, all that his mind and soul craved for, even down to the precept which governs Comte's entire system, "*on ne détruit que ce qu'on remplace*" (one only destroys what one can replace). It was natural to my father to think in processes of selection and rejection, and because he did think in that categorical and measured manner his own religious transition was of such prolonged and deliberate duration. Moreover, it harmonized with his own natural hesitancy and reflective caution. Here was no metaphysic, no ruling absolute, no condemnation. It left the whole play of his faculties free

and ended only at the portal of speculation. Even the imagination had an historical perspective, and there was a due regard for tradition. It fed the senses for their own clearer nutriment, stopping only at the unknown and at the threshold of mystery which even physically was a door that my father apparently had no desire to push open.

This symbolization of the historical spirit of man appealed to my father in precisely the form in which his instincts revolved and unfolded, accenting the affections and dramatizing the attributes both of learning and of culture; thus making active in faith what hitherto he had conceived of as necessarily passion and in that sense unsatisfying. A religion without theology—that was the attraction; a religion which revealed and connected history, thought, science and the arts with the living present, and left the sum of a man's intelligence unafraid and open. A belief without a *Custos*. A philosophy that signified activity and demanded application. A divinity of thought which lay underneath all thought as its invigorating presence. In a word, illumination, freedom. No bolts or thunderbolts. No postulates and no negatives. A spirit of continuity. This to my father was the sought and needed spirituality which demanded the full extension of his intellectual powers. It prevented him, he knew, from excelling in this or that, but it gave him what his nature longed for—an intelligent and conscientious relation to life, a purpose and a mission. And he had to have that.

He had to be of this earth and conscious of its service. Nothing less would have reconciled him. He had no vanity of power and no hankering after fame. He disliked even being called a " historian " for that reason. Mere knowledge, mere wisdom—these were insufficient. The test was service and the only use of knowledge was relativity. And so my father stepped into a religion of Humanity instinctively and inevitably. He became a Positivist because he always was a Positivist, even when at school he thought he knew enough about the classics, and almost enough about theology. The distress of mind

that tortured him in his youth and stamped him as man, derived from the process of intellectual probation which in his case was unusually severe perhaps because of a certain lack of imagination, and unusually prolonged because of his methodical deliberateness—which also was the mosaic of Comte's design. The temple of humanity can never be completed, and in this live thought, interpretive of his own nature and entirely consonant with his intellectual allegiance, my father found his faith. He used to compare it to a mountain stream fresh and clear and vibrant, and he liked to bend over such a pool and drink of the cool water. This kind of faith is necessarily robust, rather stern, and self-complete, and in all the years that I knew my father no shadow dimmed his sight.

Sometimes people would allude to my father and express regret that he did not devote himself specifically to one subject, such as history, and "make a big thing" of it, and in past times I thought so, too. But this is to misunderstand him as well as Comte. Positivism as religion signifies mental and social discipline, and it was this intellectual form of self-denial that appealed to my father for reasons that were natural in him. This, of course, is Humanism, and my father, perhaps rather strangely in so English an individualist, sunk his personality wholeheartedly in that concept; following to the letter Comte's injunction against the practice of "dispersive specialism," which had led to metaphysics and to isolated and perverted knowledge. Yet here again my father was satisfied. Such a self-denial harmonized with his own diffidence; thus, his dislike of examinations, which began when he was a boy, and also pandered to that curious hesitancy which caused him to shun any form of publicity. This discipline was an inspiration to him. He accepted it as his "command," so to speak, in life, and, I fancy, gladly owing to the clash of impetuosity and diffidence that always seemed to struggle for mastery, and certainly up to the moral climacteric of his life hampered him in so many directions. For my father needed direction. He was no

Elizabethan pushing out to unknown shores, and he was no speculative philosopher content to find some one thing that others had not found, discovery was not his magnet. Always moral purpose bound him. Hence the religionization of knowledge, which is the basis of Humanism, exactly fitted, in its dual sense of scope and object, my father's idiosyncrasy and filled the sails of his resolve. Obedience to external law which itself is modifiable by human intelligence gave my father the humility needed for intellectual discipline, moreover, Comte had refused power to the philosophers, since the heart took precedence of the mind. In a word, principle in Humanism is the governing theory. My father had no use for incoherence—social feeling implies that. He took his place naturally, physically and intellectually, as a " priest " in Comte's social system, and all the more willingly by virtue of the precept which separated practical and theoretical authority. Humanity was enough. From the hour that he had convinced himself of the social justice of a religion which embraced and implemented all man's higher faculties, he never looked back and he drew from it increasing solace. His own inward reality was at last made manifest, and his spiritual happiness began with this incorporation.

I think he came to discount much of Comte's "Polity" which obviously was written to meet the mechanism of a situation which, as it was political, the genial French philosopher did not understand; for my father was a practical man whom I never knew to be led away by schemes and speculations, and he had an inveterate distrust of all sentimentalists and of all utopias.

A religion of social love does not lend itself to the fantastic or spectacular, so that there is nothing of that nature to record. I never found my father on his knees in the lonely hours of the night, invoking peace, nor can I picture him distraught with doubt and speculative confusion, or fasting for the good of his soul. His convictions were his Faith, and his Faith consisted in living up to a

standard of conduct which he held to be true and useful. A dancing Dervish will explain the reason for his ecstatic gyrations as the craving for self-forgetfulness, or yearning to get away from self, in fact, as an exercise which affects nobody but himself; my father's ecstasy lay in the exact contrary—in remembrance, in fitting himself to a higher consciousness in order to take some active part in the social welfare of others: which is the precise difference between East and West, or in a religion which merely means fatalistic authority and one which seeks to make knowledge authoritatively helpful in the living world.

His soul externalization was confined to earth and abided in that rapture. He was the proof of his own experiment. He lived, according to Comte, *au grand jour*, and again, " for others," and consistently maintained that level. I once asked him what he considered historically Comte and Positivism had done for the world, and he answered simply: " We have been modifiers, and we have given the spirit of modification to the science and service of Man. All other religions uphold a dogma and as such are reactionary. Intellectually, Comte released the springs of the modern world, and I have done my best, or my worst, to help promote so wise and useful a message."

And this may well stand as his epitaph.

Chapter VIII

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERISTICS

MY father's character was almost as transparent as his temperament, and both were of a "high vitality." No one surely ever complained of not knowing where "he stood"; indeed, to most people his triumphing rationalism was perhaps too aggressive. Yet the impulsive, headstrong, quite Irish effervescence which threatened to involve him in every outcry and commotion afoot, was controlled by an iron cast of will which functioned mechanically. Behind the quick-pulsing blood there stood an inveterate reserve of reason, caseproof against emergencies, so that in reality my father was a cautious man who rarely acted without deliberation, and even in the little things of life, for all his hastiness and tempestuosity, he always seemed master of the impulse. To "us" he was as easy "as a book" to read. We assumed the philosophy; we were in no doubts about the tangents peculiar to the life practical of a religious philosopher.

Very early in life he showed his metal. One of his great friends at Oxford in the 'fifties was John Bridges, who was also a theological disputant and at that time much depressed, for he had failed to obtain a First Class in the Honours School, and in those days such a failure was "disastrous." My father was then a semi-theistic Rousseauite, and so furious and ranting a radical that he had attacked Tennyson's "Maud," on account of its "militarism" (how we change with years !), and was incensed at what he regarded as Oxford's "neglect" of his able

friend. It so happened that for once he had decided himself to compete for honours, namely, the Arnold Essay Prize; and as the subject, *The Jews in Europe in the Middle Ages*, was deeply interesting to him, he had already done considerable special research work, but hearing of Bridges' discomfiture and being "anxious" that his friend, who belonged to the debating group of "Mumbo-Jumbo," should prove his merits and justify the opinion my father had formed of him, he handed over to him all his materials, notes, books and data, with the result that John Bridges was an easy winner and the essay was considered so good that it was subsequently published in the Oxford "Essays," 1857. Not many youths would have done that. It shows my father's utter lack of worldly ambition, and it was a wholly typical action. John Bridges remained one of my father's numerous life-long friends and Positivist co-adjutors.

The incident is the more significant because it was the only prize my father ever himself wanted or tried to obtain. He was not a star prizeman at Oxford, though he got a "First" and was placed in an honorary Fourth History class (!). He simply "disapproved" of the examination system and made no effort to excel. He probably could have won as many Honours as he pleased, for he had a prodigious memory and a singular scholastic facility. He literally never forgot a date or fact, though he had no memory for poetry.

Here is another characteristic incident which occurred in 1871 when my father was writing on *The Fortnightly Review*, then edited by John Morley on the spacious lines of the French *Revue de deux Mondes*. Mr. (Lord) Morley, who was in those days a pugnacious Agnostic, rather approved of Bismarck's anti-Jesuit laws which my father, who was himself pilloried at the time as an "atheist," regarded as "unjust." Finding that he could not convince his friend of the "immorality" of Bismarck's action, he "severed his connection" with him and broke off further contributions, though the loss of such a

platform, which in those days had a considerable importance, meant much to him, as also the loss of Morley's friendship, but this proved to be only a temporary rift, and the prelude of many such friendly disagreements and altercations.

A man with such hungry scruples and convictions was obviously not born for material " success," nor is it surprising if his career at the Bar partook more of the nature of interest in the law, in which he was interested, than of interest in its profession. My father had a comic distaste of the limelight. He suffered from impersonalism. His aim was quixotically unselfish. True, he thought possessively, but never competitively. I don't think he ever set out to do a thing from any motive of personal advantage, the very idea of which bored him. He had no commercial sense and hardly any earthly vanity. I never heard him say " I wish " or " I want "; he was too active to wish, too adequate to want.

When his father, rather grieved at his son's moderate success, wanted him to leave Oxford " at once " and enter the Bar, he wrote back that after " long and painful deliberation " he felt he could find no satisfaction in the ordinary paths of a " successful life." This word " painful " was constantly on my father's lips. He saw things in that way, rather a pompous way. All life was morally serious to him, and personal. He was the exact opposite to the acquisitive type. Things and possessions had little attraction for him; he liked books, he did not care a straw for first editions. I can remember him when he would return home aglow with enthusiasm about his new purchases—books, prints, busts, but never furniture or chocolate, only things of the spirit. He was very fond of the Piranesi pictures, but he never bought for collection or commercially, nor did he distribute presents with the largesse of his brother, Charles, who at Christmas used to send a four-wheeler to the house, literally stuffed with boxes of gifts. He had no " antiquity " manias, and he would walk through the largest " stores " in London or Europe without wanting to buy a thing.

Yet he who was so active, impulsive, decisive and "terrifying," suffered from a curious hesitancy, or perhaps one ought to say a mental reluctance, to " follow up " a thing, and this hesitation characterized even his intellectual activities. In one sense, it was a form of self-depreciation and sensitiveness; in its intellectual form it derived clearly from Positivism which rather accentuated a natural shyness and tendency towards self-effacement. All through his life, he exhibited this modesty. It took strange shapes. Because of it, practically the whole of his unmarried life may be described as an experiment; he could not make up his mind whether to be a doer or a thinker, a politician or a writer, or even to what profession or religion to belong. After his remarkable success over Trades Unionism, a big Radical career seemed assured, but he was not concerned with a career and he drifted out of Labour and deliberately retired from active public life; notoriety was hateful to him, and for twenty years he figured in London rather as a wanderer, as rebel, Radical, barrister, journalist, Labourite, philosopher, critic, historian and Dougald Dalgetty of religious scruple. In the little things of life, this scrupulousness and self-retiring disposition was more marked; it was almost droll. For instance, when he wrote his play, " Nicephorus," he refused to consider stage technique and was surprised and rather " hurt " when Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree pointed out the difficulties of staging an " historical essay." This trait was natural to him. He had a mental objection to specialization and to all virtuosity. At school, he felt like that; his career at Oxford was governed by this queer semi-emotional abhorrence of technique and excelling, and all his life he ran away from rather than sought position. This cautiousness he extended to " us," with various results; it was a kind of paternal over-anxiety.

I can never forget his agitation when I began to bowl —at the age of ten—overarm at him. " Take care," he shouted from the wicket. I was too young. I would sprain a muscle. It—but the next ball took his off-bail, much to

our mutual delight. Again, when as a youth I was working for an examination, some publisher asked me to write a little book on Spain, based on an article I had written in a review, and the fee offered was fifty pounds. I had never earned money before, and I "jumped" at the prospect of entering the lists of authorship; but when I told my father about it, he raised all manner of objections. Could I punctuate? Was I sure of my facts? Was my Spanish sufficiently scholarly? And so on, until he fairly "put the wind up" my literary ambitions. The result was that I declined, and the publisher was so astonished that he asked for my reason, suggesting that perhaps sixty pounds might add to the inducement. Yet again I refused. I look back to-day on that frustrated beginning with astonishment. My father probably thought I would injure myself by too youthful a display, and such was my trust in his judgment that I concurred. It was a typical incident.

When as a boy I first went to Switzerland with him, my chief desire was to have the conventional row of nails in my boots, but my father thought six nails per boot were sufficient. This prohibition, so characteristic of his anxious solicitude, caused a fearful scene; eventually I solved the difficulty by keeping two pairs of boots, one religiously nailed and the other for show—before I went out. He was always thinking in that kind of way. When I was sixteen, I told him I was doing no good at school and wanted to "write"; he replied that I "couldn't spell," which was true, and that if I did not learn to read Homer in the original I would never be able to write a leading article, which made me despair, for my ambition at that age was to write leading articles. Years later, when I was writing a dispatch in Berlin for some newspaper, he came in the room and found me smoking a cheap German cigar in my shirt sleeves. "But this is not your work, is it?" he asked anxiously. "Surely you don't mean that journalism is done in that slap-dash fashion!" and he looked over my shoulder at the copy. He started back. "You can't send that," he cried, "all London will be

ablaze at such a phrase, besides its tautological." He seemed so perturbed that I thought it better to tell him it was a "rough copy," and the remark relieved him. "You will be sacked if you are not more careful," he said, "or thrown into a German prison." I did not show him the cause of my dispatch, which came from the newspaper office and ran: "Send one thousand words; strong, sensational condemnation," or he might have advised me to resign.

All this may have been partly *naïveté*, he was oddly ingenuous. He expresses his surprise in the Autobiography that all the appointments he received were "thrust" upon him: he did not see that he himself went out of his way to avoid getting appointments. Similarly, he explained his robust health to his habit of "walking" on his holidays in "clear" mountain air; he apparently did not realize that his astonishing health was due to his astonishing constitution, which was both germ- and nerve-proof. He always saw the good in people and was always being rudely shaken. He attributed his longevity to his habit of eating sago pudding and not smoking, and seriously believed it. I think he thought the apple—a fruit he detested—the cause of man's "fall," not woman, and when I tried to make him taste sauerkraut in Germany, or, to give it its war American name, "Liberty cabbage," he said he would rather eat bran-mash, which at least was "wholesome." My father was no psychologist. He took practically no interest in the analysis of motive. Perhaps that is why modern fiction bored him. The night was—the night, the time to sleep. A woman was—woman, and her place also was established. And so on. The stars! Well! The stars twinkled and what more could a man want?

The Victorians, we must not forget, were Puritans. Lord Morley describes how Mill "refused greatness" to Victor Hugo because of his lack of social morality. This reflects my father's attitude. Mill, too, had this sense of world pain and aching desire to help, and my father, as a

young man, was largely influenced by Mill. Despite his directness, he was, (emotionally), discretionary, and never more so than in the matter of religion. He was quite un-Pagan and had no sense of animism, by which I mean that he was not part of the moods and motives of nature, however much he enjoyed their manifestation. He would never lie full length upon the grass and revel in the bare earth, or seize a fern with frenzied interest, as Gissing would, and apostrophize its beauties, or draw deep thrills of wonder from the sweetness of a summer night. He was no Romeo of the firmament and no conjuror of the senses. His beatitudes owed little to externalization, they glowed from within, and I never heard him talk about space or infinitude and the illimitable wonder of the astronomical heavens. Part of this incuriosity was no doubt deliberate, but it was also inherent. He could discuss painting and art with extraordinary cultured interest and knowledge, but he did not himself belong to its living consciousness, and his interpretations were observed rather than felt; they were not intuitional. In a word, he was not a poet.

I believe he had almost an objection to an orchid, for example, so little did the artificial appeal to him; he far preferred edelweiss, perhaps because it belonged to his beloved Alps; and nothing bored him more than a " visit " through rows of greenhouses full of orchids or exotic plants, as was wont to be expected of a guest in some Victorian houses, when games were taboo on a Sunday afternoon. His " response " did not come from without, except in a panoramic sense. He loved great vistas of mountains, big rolling expanses, snow, rock, crags and precipices, and such things seemed to be of him, as it were, he who was so inordinately sane, natural, healthy and exuberant.

He always appeared to me as a kind of humanized element. Nature, of course, is not " mysterious "; its wonders lie in simplicity, consistency and relentless truth, all which may be said to describe my father's attitude both

towards nature and life, as if he was himself a component part. A snow mountain meant what a pearl necklace means to a woman. But an orchid ! Such an hermaphroditic " contraption " meant nothing to him. His outlook was sure and unmetaphysical. His humanity was Homeric.

Like all Victorians, my father was a bit of a " snob," though I fancy that this inclination arose out of his historical sense for titles, places and houses, for certainly in the days when he was championing Trades Unionism and violently interceding on behalf of the French Communists, he was probably the most unsnobbish and unselfish lawyer in London. In Britain it is difficult not to be a trifle " snobbish." I don't mean that my father would write off a dinner with a commoner if he had an opportunity to dine with a lord, it was not that kind of thing at all; yet he yielded to titular or hereditary " fascination," and one could not " stump " him on the genealogy of the aristocracy (pre-war), which he knew almost as well as he knew the Bible, and he rather liked talking " families " and heraldry. I don't think it amounted to more than that. After all, the history of England is the story of its aristocracy, and no country is more full of manorial mansions, in the lore of which my father was an " expert." He was not in the least personally snobbish. But he had the class spirit. He always " dressed " for dinner, and he saw no want of humour in describing himself as a " gentleman." He was not an equalitarian, despite his French republicanism; upon all such matters he was " incurably English."

He was that all through, the Islander, except in respect of France. I suppose his sense of humour must be admitted to have been weak. He loathed vulgarity and all forms of triviality, and he was not a " smoke-room " companion. Here, again, he was of his age and of his type. Some of the pre-Raphaelites may have " looked in " at music-halls, but surely none of the " great Victorians " ever did such a thing; the comic religious man is in any case a monstrosity and on the whole his humour

was more robust than most of his renowned contemporaries that I had any knowledge of, and more human. If no vitriola ever entered his house he had no religious philosophy of gloom and was the last man to condemn gaiety. Compared with the Mills, Herbert Spencer, Lecky, etc., he must have been quite a "man about town," for he travelled too much to be insular, and there was nothing morose or sinister about his morality. True, it was not so much peoples abroad who interested him; he travelled for historical and art study, and this attitude was temperamental. He was no cosmopolitan, and by no means good at modern languages, though he knew French thoroughly. His German was "guide-Swiss." His conversational Italian was of the *molto parvo* species, even if he read Dante with a dictionary. He was too temperamentally English to be a linguist.

In a world of "real politics" my father, with his volcanic individualism and mental hesitancy, constantly appeared to be eccentric, if not cantankerous, and at times he would seem almost a reactionary. Partly this, too, derived from Comte who, despite his theoretical communism, believed in property and, of course, implicitly in social law, order, discipline and—an aristocracy of principle and of talent. For instance, Ireland. My father was a life-long Home Ruler, yet he was intolerant of Sinn Fein and I am not quite sure whether he did not secretly sympathize with the "Black-and-Tans," for he loathed treachery and the Irish rebellion sickened him.

He violently supported the French Commune, but he was opposed to all mob violence, all Socialist theory and Bolshevism was mere anarchy in his eyes. Similarly, he was anti-imperialist, though Gambetta, who, by the way, favoured Comte, was his life-long hero. He was Royalist for England, Republican for France, and anti-Bismarck for Europe, though pro-Mazzini, pro-Garibaldi, and pro-Boer. This rather bewildering logic, and it was logical, is French in spirit. The explanation is the absence of "politics" in his political values. My father, with Comte,

was a devout believer in the French Revolution and in the cultural mission of the French genius. He did not support Arabi Pasha, for example, like Wilfrid Blunt, who loved the Arabs and espoused causes Byronically, out of sheer romance, for he had no sentimental feeling for the East or the Arabian Nights, the dirt and squalor of which he disliked intensely, nor did the " call " of the desert allure him. It was interesting to watch Blunt and my father together. Both were emotionalists; the one a poet, the other a philosopher. Both were crusaders. Both thoroughly understood one another and yet disagreed upon every conceivable European matter. Sometimes Wilfrid Blunt would drive up with his Arab horses and stay for a couple of nights. A more handsome type was surely never seen, and great was my delight to hear Blunt with his Olympian charm advocating the drinking of water out of a duck-pond in preference to my father's " gouty red wine." As for the Poles, the Hungarians, the Boers and the Arabs, my father had no personal knowledge of them and in all probability would have firmly disapproved of their ways if he had known them; but to him such was not the point. He was for the " little Peoples " and always ready to leap to their side. A religious sociology exactly fitted his temperament. His ethic was no contemplative abstraction or emotional hobby. The thing had to be applied and lived. This was in his blood, and I fancy he secretly rather sympathized with the padre who goes his round with a whip. Not that he would ever have used it, still that was the sentiment.

On the question of war, which is the great moral problem of the world, my father was at times baffling. He had no sympathy with the Quaker view and was a consistent opponent of Lord Courtney's " pacifism," indeed, he was inclined to decry all sentimentalism about stopping war, and even to share the foreigner's view—the biological necessity view—about war, and I never quite understood his position as a " little Englander " who furiously opposed our imperial wars, while actively hostile to theoretical

pacificism; thus, he did not believe in the League of Nations and regarded President Wilson as a Utopian. On this issue I have not found sufficient logic in Humanism which cannot claim to stand towards the vital problem of war on a pedestal of opportunist and eclectic intellectualism; and the Positivist attitude, as a religion of the laws and science of Progress, in this connection is a bit perplexing; indeed, when peace was ultimately made my my father was staggered at its punitive measures which he styled " impossible, ruinous, suicidal " (*Last words*). However, he quickly recovered from his war " illusions," which he admitted, as to the " statesmanship " of the politicians, though he failed to see that this victory " madness " was in great part the consequence of the blank cheque given to the presiding caucus, who ruled Europe, by educated opinion and religion which had virtually abdicated all rights—and responsibilities. Only war fever had force, and so the peace-makers complied with the demand—they had advertised themselves into negationalism. Never was Britain so intellectually and morally bankrupt as in the months of the peace. Not a sound was heard, not a sensible note. The consequences of political "reparations" are slowly becoming apparent to us and to the new Europe.

My father, I rejoice to record, hastily recanted and denounced the Peace. He did not believe in annexations and indemnities. He who had fought for a reasonable Poland for fifty years was flabbergasted at the Polish " empire " drawn on the map as a veritable *casus belli*. He felt indignant about the confiscation of German private property, which has established a hideous victory precedent, and on the last occasion we spoke together about Europe he confessed that the Allies had made a purely physical peace which was not even practical, and that a peaceful issue was well-nigh inconceivable. He asked me how I accounted for such a moral breakdown, and I told him I regarded it as the peace of a plutocracy gone warmad which did not understand the use of money, and that

these men were supreme because no other opinion existed, which could gain a hearing.

Later, my father felt this deeply. He could not understand how it had come to pass. It was the moral stupidity of the peace that appalled him. I said: " This is hardly progress, is it ? " He winced at the words. " It is folly and criminal folly," he replied, " and I am glad I shall not see the consequences."

I tried to be facetious. " The Pope did something to help," I said, a remark which my father considered for a while in silence; then he burst out: " The Pope be blowed. If we had listened to him the Germans would have won." I replied that a negotiated peace was always desirable and that soldiers would have made a practical peace whereas it was the " knock-out " politics which had distorted men's minds, and I could not understand his blind support at the time of a mere physical passion which was inconsistent with the moral control he had always stood for, and, indeed, with the precepts of a religion of progress. Perhaps fortunately at this juncture the waiter appeared with a grilled sole and we did not pursue the argument. After a while, like a true school-boy, he looked up. " Maybe," he said, " you would like to order German wine. I'll stick to my French claret." I ordered English ale and drank a pint. " The war," I said, " will at least try all the religions, and the war about that will probably soon be upon us." He agreed, but changed the subject. " It is the end of a system," he said, " and probably of all the old European foundations."

I am inclined to think that my father's " little Englandism," which made him so consistent an opponent of imperial expansion, derived also from his alarmist nature. He always thought we were spreading out too far. The dangers of a " far-flung " empire were constantly on his mind. Exactly the same method of reasoning explains his attitude towards Labour. He was all for the rights of Unions, and he made their position legal and enduring, but he was deeply against the politicization of Trade

Unionism, which he considered to be injurious to the common moral interest. Comte, of course, "saw" a religious sociological proletariat—this was the difficulty. Socialism has no religious basis, it is a mechanism of political power, hence the more Socialist Labour became the further it drifted from a religious Humanism. When my father was in Germany in 1898, I tried to induce him to meet Bebel, the great leader of Social Democracy, but he refused to consider such a meeting. "I have nothing to say," he said, "I am not a Social Democrat and I regard Karl Marx as an iconoclast, and a fool." I did not persist in the circumstances. Bebel wanted to meet my father, but my father was not interested in Germany.

The fighting prelate is, of course, contrary, and any religion consistently concerned with life and politics has to "take sides" and must be, as a business man would say, practical. During the war we saw all the churches blessing the flag on purely national grounds, and my father was as stoutly pro-French as M. Clemenceau himself, with whom he had distinct points of resemblance. But I must not pursue this delicate subject here. The point is that the man who courageously incurred public odium on behalf of half the small nations of Europe and Asia, found himself a popular figure in the war on the score of his bellicosity. The spiritual man rarely "turns the other cheek." He is either the boisterous clergyman of the eighteenth century or the meek restrictive abstraction of the nineteenth. The Humanist astonished his Radical friends, and I fancy my father was himself oddly surprised, if not perturbed, at the "popularity" which descended upon him for the first time in his life owing to his war enthusiasm. He admitted that it was a world "dog fight," and to the death. All this in a moral philosopher is somewhat bewildering, but my father was bewildering in his passions and proclivities, as men of the Cross generally are. He had the quarter-staff pugnacity of the friar whom, as a boy, I used to prefer to Robin Hood; he hit hard and he hit often, but always in the open and he never—scratched.

My father's opinions did not obtrude themselves aggressively; they stood in the foreground, as it were, like so many signposts and " we " always knew where to find them. Our troubles, as we grew older, were not so much personal as impersonal: those of my brother arising out of methods and schools of painting; mine being more mundane and as regards books turning upon the rights of an author to interpret life faithfully—which notion my father would dismiss as " German student blackguardism."

This good old Victorian word " blackguardism " was a favourite of his; he liked strong epithetal generalizations, and I am sure it did him good to let off steam with the use of extravagant language, but, of course, that kind of thing did tie one up, and discretion became the only alternative. I remember once counting up the themes and possibilities of safe conversation and coming to the conclusion that there was only one, namely none; but I was very young then and quite possibly my assertiveness was as obnoxious to him as many of his vetoes were to me. Still, I did manage to talk a good deal. We talked freely with my mother in his presence and aired all manner of startling and heterodox views; sometimes he would rise from the table and leave us to talk it out as we pleased; occasionally he would join in and control the conversation; on other occasions he would " smash " us. These smashes looked more dangerous than they were. He did not intend to be unkind, but in those authoritarian days there was no objective view on the clash of wills in the family; he just couldn't stand the opinion expressed, and when he felt like that further discussion was impossible.

Once we had an old-fashioned butler whose particular delight it was to discuss religion with my father. He would come in to shut the shutters and begin: " This is a bad business over the Pope, sir." These discussions used to drive my father frantic, and one morning Jackson left. My father could not tolerate presumptuous stupidity. He regarded weakness as a crime, and all criminals with loathing; he was a true " Old Bailey " lawyer, but he

enjoyed a little fun. When Lord Morley received the O.M., he wrote a "funny-cuts" letter of congratulation with the new title on the envelope—which seemed to annoy his friend, who wrote back almost tartly, complaining that "between friends," etc., and my father in turn was perturbed at the poor reception accorded to his "jest." He liked a practical joke, and we played some good "April Fool" jests on him. But the butler on the Holy See was too much. Half an hour of that gentleman made my father semi-apoplectic.

Another joke was the porter of the Athenæum Club, who addressed him as "sir" and explained that he had concluded he was "in the last batch." The notion of my father accepting a title was too droll; but after the war, *horribile visu*, he became "seriously alarmed" that some such honour was contemplated and he "took steps" to make his position clear. In a letter to Mrs. W. K. Clifford, 11th December 1921, he wrote:—

"I have accepted gratefully the freedom of the City (of Bath) offered me by the unanimous vote of the Council in public session. That a republican can accept. Some time ago I formally declined a very handsome offer made me by the P.M.—not a title. I said that on principle I intend to be free from any honours nominally from the King, but really given by a Party leader on more or less Party solicitation, and I have asked all my friends to abstain from suggesting any Honour of the State or Crown—I would not accept the garter! My ambition is to live and die plain F. H., without, as I say, 'any prefix or affix.'"

That was how he stood in relation to worldly affairs. He stood so outside that any public recognition of his services would have appeared incongruous. The "High Priest" of Bahaism may become a knight, but not of Positivism—who cannot plumb the "shoals of honour."

There never was a more precise, orderly and conscientious man. For one thing, my father himself never varied. He never changed his hours, habits, tastes or

predilections. No one ever thought of asking him how he was ? It would have been like asking the stars whether they were happy. He was always the same, invariably fresh, always up at the same hour, always hardy, hearty and buoyant. At a certain moment he would carefully wipe his pen, snap the inkpot to and finish his daily writing. All his life at lunch he ate a milk pudding in preference to sweets or pastry. He generally arrived at a station half an hour before the train started, and even then thought he was late. He never left anything out when packing or anything behind. He was automatically steady and steadfast and never had moods or colds or requirements. I cannot remember him ever being " off colour." In all things he was abstemious, fastidiously punctual and what the French mean by *journalier;* he simply could not forget to wind up his watch at night, and to appear late for a meal was an affront. For years he would call " us " in the mornings with hearty shouts, first one, then the other, to the astonishment of guests, who were alarmed at this matutinal uproar which was just exuberance on his part. He felt so fit on awakening that he had to shout.

Daily he was besieged with letters from aspirants, seeking help and advice, to everyone of whom he would reply, sometimes at considerable length. He never grudged the time thus spent on unremunerative work, nor did it occur to him to consider whether this intrusion on his morning's labours was profitable to himself. His pleasure lay in his sense of duty in giving out. He would give away what he knew freely to any man and at any time. He was always ready to assist the " lame duck," to lecture gratuitiously, to spend hours answering his voluminous correspondence. His " indifferentism " never took a personal form except when he disapproved. He was unusually generous towards " young " writers, and he made several reputations. His infatuation for Maurice Hewlett was remarkable, and his home was always full of European refugees, cooled-down revolutionaries, and

other restless spirits who had daunted the powers that be and come croppers.

Though my father was the son of a prosperous merchant and had been in the law for many years, he was strangely lacking in the commercial spirit. He regarded money with a droll kind of awe. An investment was an investment. The idea of moving money never occurred to him—I really believe he thought the theory of money was an exact science. At the same time, he was curiously fretful about monetary affairs and would fire off long tirades to brokers of bewildering and terrifying purport. I remember a man in the City telling me that my father's letters on finance were the most " formidable " he had ever seen. " I never could make him see," he said, " that the use of money is circulation. He still has the old stocking idea, only he thinks that banks and shares are the stockings." My father's economics were like his mathematics—decidedly weak, yet though he was himself almost preposterously indifferent to money he had a " certain respect " for those who possessed it. He was furiously indignant when I once suggested that a man's wealth was made out of other men's ignorance; and on another occasion he was " profoundly hurt " because I chaffed him about his visit to Mr. Carnegie whom, I believe, I styled a " plutocrat." My father bounded up in his chair. " Mr. Carnegie is my friend," he exclaimed. " If you insult him you are insulting me." This wrath perplexed me, for I had not intended to insult either the one or the other, and my father had rather brought me up to despise pelf, and in his own case, I knew, had never sought to make money; but he was like that. One never knew. I began to explain that a man who had " made the Trades Union Laws . . ." My father slashed out fiercely: " You can have his golf-sticks that he gave me and do what you like with the silly things, but I won't have a word against my friend." My father was in these little worldly respects rather childish. He rarely wrote without some reference to impending ruin. He was " terrified " when he heard

I banked at the same bank, and to quiet him I moved my account. He told me he had once handed over some thousands to an American to invest. I asked him what had happened and he said he did not know. He thought they were " in oil." He was not sure, anyhow the capital had gone, and he added: " I'm so sorry for my friend; he's quite upset about it." My father's financial speculations unfortunately did not stop at the " unknown."

My father had a foible for good looks, rather curious in so stern a moralist, which he may have inherited from his father, who was very handsome, as were his two brothers, Lawrence and Robert; or it may have been classical in origin arising out of his love of Greek statuary and of the social use of beauty. I think he revered the late Professor Beesly, partly, too, on this account, who certainly had a magnificent leonine appearance; but the most amusing instance of this leaning can be found in his Memoirs, where he described how he was called upon to arbitrate between Karl Marx, the author of " Capital," and a young Frenchman named Le Moussu, a Communard refugee who boasted that he had " shot an Archbishop," whom my father describes, almost like an æsthete, as " one of the most beautiful youths I ever saw."

My father's award went to the Frenchman, Le Moussu; Karl Marx, he writes, " floundered about in utter confusion," and it is perfectly clear that he was glad to give justice to the French ecclesiasticide. This scene to me is delicious. The notion of Karl Marx, the celebrated Socialist founder and economist, getting hopelessly entangled in the figures of his own case and the intricacies of patent-right law, and the Apollonian Communist who had shot an archbishop, each refusing to acknowledge the Sacred Book, struggling and arguing with my father, who, as a Positivist and at the time denounced as a heretic, yet insisted as a fastidious lawyer upon the letter of the law which could not come into operation until the litigants had taken the oath on the Bible, in which oath all three vehemently disbelieved for three diametrically opposite

reasons, seems to me to be good humour. Eventually, they compromised by " touching the book." Then my father proceeded with the litigation. The French Communist Apollonian slayer of an archbishop got judgment, and Karl Marx—lost his capital.

That little incident is surely memorable. First, Marx going to law to save his money; secondly, the Bolshevist of 1870, an easy winner on looks and logic; thirdly, my father as Positivist, whose notions of finance were mediaeval, lecturing Marx on his crude mathematics; lastly, the human contest over the oath, and formalism or the oath winning, as it usually does. Marx was regarded in England at that time as a wholly insignificant foreign agitator. My father was then a Communist in Comte's sense—he quite outgrew that tendency—yet absolutely hostile to Marx's capitalistic theories which have since played so extraordinary a part in the world. It is in a little incident such as this that human nature declares itself and is seen to be the real problem of mankind, so that one is inclined to revoke the dictum and cry, " *si vieillesse savait !* "

In some respects my father was curiously conventional, indeed, his natural propensity was to think and behave like any other man of his class, and he was studiously fussy about the proprieties. He never worked in a dressing-gown, and sternly reprobated the " slap-dash " Byronic tradition. His punctuality was celebrated and he would almost argue with the clock. He liked time-tables, inventories, and everything that contributed towards the regular life, and he probably was the most consistently normal man who ever wrote books. A certain pompousness characterized his modes of expression. Thus, he would write to me, " now that you have attained to man's estate," etc., or " you may now regard yourself as a proved journalist." He was always classifying. He would write to an author: " Your book establishes your claim to enter literature "; and, again, " your poem satisfies me as to your ability to do serious work." This attitude rather " terrified " Victorian women, and several have described

to me their "agony" at a first *rencontre*. But this stiffness was not intellectualism, it was partly shyness, partly rigidity of outlook. My father could reel off delightfully easy letters, but in conversation he was not so affluent. He could not talk "shuttle-cock" and keep it up. Sooner or later, a decision would fall which was apt to be disconcerting. Still he was not of the type who *s'écoute*. He never "jawed" or talked down.

That about exhausts the sum of his weaknesses which in the majority of cases were more apparent than real, or more apparent because he was in all essentials so humanly, if not always sympathetically, real. Anything in the nature of humbug was entirely alien to him, and if at times people thought his bearing dull it was because of its utter lack of hypocrisy, which, of course, is somewhat odd in a world where most men aspire to appear what they are not. My father did not even aspire to appear what he was. He knew that Positivism was not an English thought and somewhat foreign to our national genius, and that consequently he had placed himself outside the working mechanism of instinctive co-operation. This may have been his martyrdom—in the sense of martyrdom that the religious mind seeks, somewhat as a woman views herself in regard to man; yet I would hesitate to assert as much. My father, who never read a fairy tale till he was forty, was hardly one to whom self-denial would appeal, for his religion was intellectually emotional and completely satisfying to his soul. I doubt if he thought about himself rhapsodically. He assumed the world. He had to convince himself, but once that task was accomplished the rest did not matter; at least, that is how I always thought.

Naturally, I did not for many years understand his religious but quite uncomplex nature, and life was not exactly easy or intimate under his irascible jurisdiction. But as father, he was truly wonderful. He never "failed" us. He was inexorably just, impartial, generous and "fair" in all essentials, even if he could not stand contradiction, or, as Lord Morley would sometimes put

it: " Now, Fred, you must curb your impetuosity." An impetuous religious philosophy in the home is apt to be " trying," and my father was perhaps too prone to " lay down the law." Tact was not his strong point at any time, and he was rather ignorant of human nature and even averse to take it into consideration. For that reason he was a difficult man to argue with. I don't think he understood conversation in that spirit. He could not argue a thing quietly. The moment that moral considerations arose, and they arose sporadically at any moment, the even flow of talk was interrupted by temperamental vehemence. He would dismiss subjects and men—with an adjective. It is astonishing, when I come to think of it, how little he spoke to us about Postitivism. He never once asked me if I was a Positivist or what religion I favoured. He hardly seemed to care. A Positivist father with four sons has a difficult position, for no man is a prophet in his own family. On the weather, " we " perhaps did accept his " considered " verdicts, but religion is an emotional matter and, as the French say, " one does what one can." I often tried to discuss Humanism with him, but somehow, perhaps because of my manner or for some reason not apparent to me, my attempts were curiously abortive. My father would say: " I don't want to prevent you from embracing any religion you like, provided you don't become a Hebrew." He made no effort to " talk " me into his way of thinking. In the family, he put up the shutters, so to speak, of philosophy. On religion, he was almost strangely open-minded; perhaps because he felt it himself so deeply, and he had ceased to expect others to feel accordingly. I verily believe that if I had come home one day and told him I had " gone into " Presbyterianism he would have commiserated with my convictions or misfortunes; anything sincere, he understood, and all religious sincerity made an irresistible appeal to him, even if he disapproved on every ground of principle.

This, of course, is Humanism, and my father had no

bigotry. To us, he stood as a Solomon of parental care and justice. No father could be kinder or more generous. I never asked him for a "little monetary help" that he did not send a cheque by return of post coupled with literary admonitions of the "nearness of the workhouse," and, as a rule, he added a *douceur*. Once I got involved in the purchase of the "Encyclopædia," and when he heard that he was so pleased that he sent me a cheque to pay for —"that useful source of knowledge which I trust you will now read and digest"—at once, including the revolving bookcase. Many years ago when I "lost" my first newspaper job, he sent me by wire a £100 with this message: "Take a holiday and look ahead." I did, and met a man the next night who offered me a much better post. My father was like that to all of us, a truly splendid parent. He "met" the occasions. He was in reality tender-hearted and almost sentimentally scrupulous towards all around him. He assisted many a man to "get a position," and would go out of his way to help someone he admired or liked, and stand by him through thick or thin. In various ways, he must have given away quite a lot of money, promoting this and that interest, this and that person. And these enthusiasms were quite unselfish, and sometimes unknown to their recipients. If he read a book he thought well of, he would write all round to interested people, pointing out its merits. He was very attached to the late Mr. Massingham at one time and spoke of him as an "oracle." He had an heroic sense of finding the "right man for the right post," and would spare no pains to get Mr. So-and-so appointed here, or Mr. So-and-so appointed there, and this whether he knew the man personally or not. The cause stood always uppermost. This was his politics, and it can hardly be wondered at if politicians did not always see eye to eye with him.

The truth is, my father was a modern. He did not belong to the past and he was a Victorian really only in character. As a man, he will probably be more intelligible a hundred years hence than he was in his own time to

which, emotionally, he scarcely belonged. A religious sociologist is still somewhat of an anomaly, since mankind prefers to believe in what it does not know rather than apply what little it does know, and so both spiritually and philosophically my father may be said to have stood in between two periods. A man of fortitude who came to recognize that his life was an example, and was willing to forgo the great heights and the great depths for the lesser virtues of self-realization, and perhaps limited on that account. Limited to reason, fixed and governed by his own calculus, which stopped conscientiously, perhaps rather abruptly, yet certainly never regretfully, at the splendours of human achievement.

And it is in this respect of character that his life stands out and occupies a place that men will turn back to, just as they refer to an old book, for inspiration. In an age of materialism, he sought only real values. What money could buy had almost no interest for him, and yet he was one of the happiest men who ever lived. In his lonely turret of moral unworldliness, he almost found the philosopher's stone. The vanities of life passed him by and left him continuously refreshed. He sought nothing from men and gave to them all that he had. He never wrote a word with the idea of whether it would " pay," and he never altered a word in order to make it pay. Whether politically, socially or intellectually, his activities were radiantly impersonal and free from all selfish design. He might have won to high worldly success; he chose to be a simple citizen and a practical philosopher.

This is his attestation. The men of to-morrow may find guidance in such stout service and endeavour of so definitely an English stamp. My father could hardly have been the product of any other race. He belonged to a moderate climate and to an island whose genius is individualism. Always true and ready and steadfast. A man of gales. One who believed in himself and was believed in, and had the hardihood to believe in others. A Briton who stood passionately for the concept of civilization.

Chapter IX

RELIGION AND ATMOSPHERE

THOUGH the philosophers had clearly triumphed in the 'eighties, in most homes in my young days religion imparted a severe atmosphere which took the form of a Sabbatical negativism. " We " were no exception. Sunday with us was duly kept as a day of rest and of rigid abstention from workaday recreation. People have often spoken to me about this Positivist upbringing, asking whether our home was not arid and chill, and also what prevented me in those days from doing wrong under a system which eliminated divine wrath and even in this world corporal punishment. While willing to concede the austerity of our surroundings, which they assume, they ask in what lay our corrective in the absence of transport or of divine exaltation. A boy, they contend, is not actuated by "social love." What, then, was the deterrent to self-love ? How did my father make manifest his own spiritual authority ? How, in short, could the idea of the family take the place in a boy's mind of the humility associated with divinity and the stupendous awe inculcated by the Unknown ? This, then, would seem the place to attempt an answer.

My first religious recollections begin with my mother, who took us through the Bible. Her method was one of auto-suggestion. We absorbed Genesis. The Garden of Eden was beautifully illustrated in our book, and we had discussions on the theory of origin which, I fancy, sometimes led to difficulties. My mother had a pious manner

which always impressed me, and I found those historical speculations exceedingly interesting. Otherwise, I doubt if I had any definite instruction. My mother took shape in my mind as a highly religious person who made me feel religious in a sense, too. Yet my father stood ever in the foreground, and long before the days of Newton Hall, which began in 1881—and I was present at the opening ceremony—I was conscious of his moral force which was to me a religion. The question, "What constitutes religion?" need not be discussed. The point is that my father represented to me what I was able at that time to understand by religion, and that *feeling* played a predominant part in my impressions as distinct from any comprehension of the motives behind it. A boy compares. He estimates by analogy. I saw in my father a plausible counterpart to the Roman whose precepts I had been given to read at an early age as part of my educational curriculum, and always found helpful with their roseate morning optimism.

I trust I may not be misunderstood when I say that the words of Marcus Aurelius, "the intelligence of the universe is social," sunk in and seemed to me, as a boy of about ten, to be Positivism. My father appeared to me very much like the Stoic. Lest this assertion be thought far-fetched, let me explain that we heard a good deal about the Greeks and Romans, who thus became my first heroes. My father had busts of them in rows all round his library. Flaxman's drawings, too, are not a bad self-educator, and we gorged on them. At any rate, Marcus Aurelius figured prominently in my young enthusiasms, and as most boys are imitative, I suppose I considered it perfectly natural to draw comparisons. The idea of a boy reading Aurelius may seem ridiculous and perhaps priggish to-day, but the Roman is pretty good reading and abounds in little touches of human nature that appeal both by their simplicity and sagacity; moreover, they are joyful. I still have the copy presented to me by Professor Beesly. Even to-day the Roman provides substantial fare to meditate upon.

The precepts of Marcus Aurelius seemed to me largely those of my father, even down to the injunction bidding a man beware of too much "specialized" effort. My father always spoke in that spirit, and it explains the constant reference to himself as not a "literary" man. He did not want to be regarded as an "expert." His indifference to personal gain, and to the "prizes" of life was definitely Aurelian and conceived as such. The Stoic Emperor was surely the first practical Humanist, and one has only to glance through the thoughts of the Roman to see the moral connection between his system and subdivision of life and the sociology of Comte.

So much for general atmosphere which was entirely normal. The family life was calm and even. I never heard differences of opinion. The minds of my parents seemed to function singly and reciprocally. I suffered from no repressions, and I fancy I had an easy time, wondering perhaps at the solemnity of my father's dicta, overpowered no doubt by the vitality of his presence, kept in restraint by the dignity of example. Otherwise, I believe I romped, fooled and certainly lazed, like other boys.

I have often wondered whether I missed some of the things most children are given to bite their teeth upon. It is hard to say. Consciously, I think not. I have no recollection of wanting anything that I had not got. Certainly I did not desire any substitute for the home morality without a whip. I could indulge in my dreams with impunity. Discipline was not severe. Nor was my father in any way terrifying as moralist, and my impressions must have been distinct because they are so curiously vivid still to-day.

On the problem of death, always an interesting subject to boys, I was reasonably contented with my lot. I received jolts and jars, once even a shock, after a certain nursery-maid had told me that "policemen with horns that grew out of their helmets took away all heretic little boys and doused them in the flaming fire of redemption." That, I recollect well, was an excitement.

First the horns, then the fire; lastly, the long word that I could not understand. For a whole week I was pensive, and I went about with melancholy apprehension, and whenever I saw a policeman I gazed wonderingly at his helmet to see where possibly his horns could find a passage. Little by little I pieced together the logic of this terrible warning, working backwards, and found it wanting. Not wrong in theory, upon which I reckoned it was beyond me to decide, but in statement of fact, for when I asked my father what lay under the ground and he told me that water came first, lying on top of fire, I felt I could turn the hose on my nurse with reassured complacency. The problem of survival after death " came up " in the usual fashion, and I can recollect often asking the great question: What happens ? There I was limited to the comprehensible. I was given to understand that " no one knew " and that therefore I had better confine my attention to matters proportionate to my intelligence. I did not get much further on that particular subject, but as such seems to be the position of most people even in this advanced scientific age, I need not enlarge upon my flimsy excursions into the realm of eschatology. Life interested me much more.

And the life of my father began to interest me, in a new sense, his life outside the house, which must, I saw, be influencing people; and I could grasp that much by the way that people and even strangers would approach and speak to him, and go out on a wet night to hear him lecture at Newton Hall, and talk about him to me. His dimensions grew. I felt his importance. I was naturally proud of it, and liked being taken to hear him, not because I understood much of what he said or even tried to, but because I gathered that here was something which explained him to me and must mean infinitely more than I could comprehend and probably a good deal more than most of the others either—to judge by the looks of them —were likely to understand. In this way I acquired a measurement of size regarding my father; he always

seemed to me to preside naturally wherever he was and particularly at Newton Hall, and I can remember how jealously I compared him with M. Pierre Laffitte when he lectured there, and how easily my father won in my estimation, perhaps because M. Laffitte spoke from a sitting posture and dwelt so frequently and with such an emphatic pause on the conjunction *et* (as Frenchmen do), which, in my opinion, was weak.

In those tadpole days I imbibed what I could of Positivism without difficulty. I liked the maxims over the rostrum. I liked the busts of the great men adorning the walls. The lack of ceremony, too, was pleasing, and I liked seeing the earnest faces of the audience; nor was I in the least perturbed at the want of bells calling one to church, which I regarded as perhaps natural considering that the Positivist services were different and even reputed " suspect," though of what I was, of course, sublimely ignorant. With these aids, I learnt to know my father. He fulfilled my youthful expectations. Outside the home I was able to form an estimate of his significance. I believed in him absolutely. This religion of his looked real, moreover it was transparently clear that he meant it. And I could see that it was helping people; helping those less fortunate than ourselves to obtain books and read them, to come together in a quiet, sociable way and get into touch with others who were teachers and who taught for nothing. This free social atmosphere appealed to me. This, I thought, was religion. This was what my father meant by the words, " The end-progress." First, people had to get together; then they had to try to understand; after that—they did understand. It seemed reasonable, yet I was puzzled at the absence of well-dressed people, for I imagined they were the very ones who ought to be helping in such work. I suppose a boy's mind works in approximations. Mine did. I surmised that my father was pushing up a steep hill, and it was a keen pleasure for me to spot Lord Morley on rare occasions, and others whom I had heard were notables. Then I felt " we " were

getting on, for I knew that Positivists were " suspects " and socially differentiated. One always likes to feel that a thing is worth while. I doubt if any small boy gets much further than that.

It is to me to-day extremely interesting to look back upon my youth and to discover in what sense I failed, as inevitably I did, to understand my father, and yet by what means I managed to find a practical and satisfying meaning to his work and purpose. I think the festival, taken from Roman Catholicism, that impressed me most, was that of the day " of all the dead." There seemed a bigness of view about that thought which one could not escape, though naturally enough the constant references to Aristotle, Descartes, Diderot, Bichat, Condorcet were, I felt, prosaically tiresome and a trifle unpatriotic, for there were not many British busts on the walls and even Comte was a Frenchman. Nor had I naturally the foggiest notion of what a " subjective synthesis " of civilization signified, or what one had to do to become a follower of social dynamics. There were in my opinion too many long words to get keen about. But the cosmic idea was comprehensible and I got a hold of that. Also I knew that Herbert Spencer had attacked my father's theory of life, the venerable old man who wore a cap, whom at my father's request I had solemnly visited one cold foggy morning and presented with a valentine—which seemed to me far too beautiful to be handed to an " enemy," being one of those old-fashioned picture things embedded in soft cotton-wool sprayed with scent and tinsel, neatly ensconced in a cardboard box and tied with a pink ribbon. Herbert Spencer was delighted at the gift. The sense of an opposition coupled with the sensation that I had entered the lion's den—the name of Herbert Spencer in those days excited awe and wonder—sufficed to place me firmly on the side which was not dogmatic, which, of course, is the quintessence of the Positivist view. I cannot pretend to have had any coherent view of Comte's philosophy; there is, of course, a human difficulty in trying to make a

Church out of a science of state and a service out of an historical lecture-room, or an ecstasy out of an ethic. I missed the organ which I associated with devotion. There was no ecstasy. Subsequently I was to learn that it was this want that chilled the women.

None the less, though the big words mystified and the foreign names jarred, I was perceptive enough to grasp the religious nature of an historical arrangement of life and the responsible position of my father as head and expounder of such a movement that was, I felt, the explanation of his severe moral opinions. He acted up to them. At one time I wondered whether he was a " saint," but I don't think I ever regarded him in that light; nor were we encouraged to patronize saints. Anyhow, he did not look like a saint, and he was not like a hermit and he was not a visionary or the kind who wore sackcloth next to his skin; indeed, he was extremely particular and even fussy about soft wool. No, he was not that sort at all. And so my difficulty long remained unexplained. It was only much later that I realized the subjective nature of Humanism and the difference between a subjective and an objective attitude. For it was that quality in my father that coloured his every thought and expression: which caused him to define and rule out, to eliminate, to ignore; he was in all things " anthropocentric," to use one of his own words; hence his reality to me as a boy was defined and he took the place of all other " inspiration " in a perfectly rational and informal manner.

I have often been asked whether I did not miss the mystic exaltation, such, for instance, as implied by angels, and whether my mind was " satisfied " with an earthly system of belief which provided so finite or geographical a scope to a boy's imagination. The answer is, where ignorance is bliss, tis folly to be wise. My ignorance certainly sufficed me. I cannot recollect having felt in the least bit starved preternaturally, though I had always loved fairies, had qualms about ghosts and the usual healthy predilection for the miraculous. The truth is, I fancy, that

a boy, who is so much more malleable than a girl, believes in any rainbow that he is incited to believe in, and follows the natural instincts of hero-worship. It never occurred to me to doubt, to want, to criticize, not when I was quite young. Then, too, we had the idea of the Madonna held reverently before us, and Raphael's cherubs on the picture seemed to me sufficient unto our day. For the ideal of womanhood was no mere theory or ikon on the walls; it shone and glowed through the whole projection of Humanism as a live reality and perhaps took the place in my mind of any abstract and indefinite glorification. The idea of the family also occupied its niche, which again was equally plausible and gratifying. I did not get beyond or aspire to probe behind the geocentricity of this reposeful and terrestially-satisfying atmosphere in which I felt that the home was a part of the religion, just as the religion was an attachment of the whole. As for the sweet simplicities, thus the Christian precept: "Love thine enemies," I think that entered into my teaching though I do not feel sure, for Aurelius, if I remember rightly, enjoins "just punishment," and my father supported that view; still I do not think I can be accused of undue lack of comprehension on that score when to-day virtually the only hope of European civilization lies not in more dogma and doxology, whether ontological, ecclesiastical, meta-political or metaphysical, but in some practical application of the good and wise theories that lie "a-moulding" in so many books and never get a human chance. We had the word "love" as the first principle of human action, and in the background "woman" as its living embodiment. A child has no difficulty in understanding such homely virtues. They enveloped me. I do not pretend that I perceived in this connection a social law, yet in a quite perceptible form that, too, was implied.

My father often alluded to the sphere of woman in his addresses and homilies at home. I understood that there existed a relationship between family and social sympathy and that Positivism was the means which united them.

One imbibed these counsels, for I received nothing in the shape of lessons, and I had no catechism or Sunday School. I learnt by inference. My father never sought to " possess my soul," which conceivably was left to stray too freely in the ambient. If I had no instruction in theism, I was allowed a free run with the Greek deities, yet I cannot recall having ever believed in them, in which respect I suppose I shared the Pagan familiarity. The Unknown was severely left alone. No doubt I formed vistas of Paradise, as children do. The shafts of light in an evening sky are apt to set up ideas which almost naturally partake of a spiritual nature. I expect I often floated up into eternity on " wings " of fancy. Yet I certainly had no " mysticism " to ponder upon, and could have harboured no superstitious notions. True, I sometimes marvelled as I grew older that my mother so often read Thomas à Kempis who, I knew, was a Catholic, and whom, I thought, tiresome. I did not then know that Comte read him always, daily. I stuck to Aurelius, who was jolly. It was the only Positivist book I read as a boy.

On the walls of Newton Hall one of the maxims enjoined: " Live openly," which was to me a perpetual source of interest. For a long while, I puzzled over that, but at last I saw that such was in fact the motive of my father's life, that to be a Positivist one had to live in grace and that this constituted a terribly exacting rule of conduct. It was one of the few maxims that profoundly impressed me, taking, I suppose, in my mind, the place of " adoration." Whether it was due to a natural sensitiveness in this respect or not, and I am inclined to think now that it was, I used to regard that maxim with a misgiving which bordered on superstition, since it implied a religion of life and demanded a standard of conduct such, as I believed, only Walter Raleigh and the Chevalier Bayard were capable of, or Richard Lion-heart. I can perceive now that this was a wholesome moral, but in those days it took the cast in my imagination of a deterrent to evil-doing which I was conscious was going to be difficult. And there

was no palliative. It was not easy to live openly. Then there arose the question of the consequence of failing to live openly, which was left to be inferred in the absence of any threat of punishment. I think it was that which so impressed me, for my mother had ruled out retribution. To sin meant that one was not a Positivist because one had failed to live up to one's ideals, and the mere fact of the absence of punishment added coals of fire (metaphorical coals) to my predicament.

In the home this, too, was the ruling spirit. I remember on one occasion in my early youth when I expected to be punished, having snatched a ball off a stall in a shop to play football with in the Park, which misdemeanour my nurse very properly reported to my parents. Every step in the inquiry that followed remains burnt in my memory. My father was deeply pained. Yet I was truthful and made a frank confession, after which the question of punishment loomed up menacingly. My father told me that it was " usual " in such cases to flog, and that a boy who stole ought to be flogged, and as he spoke the words my eyes lingered towards his writing-table upon which lay a riding-crop. I understood intuitively why my mother had left the room. I watched him carefully. He stood up, sat down and began to change his tone, and I knew instinctively that that crop was not going to be used. My punishment eventually consisted in taking back the ball myself to the shop, when I explained, as instructed, how I came to take it—which act of confession on the morrow I duly performed after a pretty trying anticipatory walk and profound speculation whenever I caught sight of a policeman. The incident sunk deeply in my mind. This was the " non-concealed " life. I realized, as never before, the justice of my father, and I felt that being " put on my honour " instead of being punished constituted a link between us which I could not compromise, also a tribute which I dared not disgrace. I believe that this system of trust employed by my father made us unusually truthful as boys. I learnt to tell the truth not out of fear of punishment,

but from a sense of respect to my parents, and I always look back upon those beginnings of the conscious struggle between right and wrong with gratitude. In this way I absorbed the religion of duty. I obtained a grasp of elementary principles. I got it firmly into my head that Humanism signified conduct and attitude rather than any celestial preoccupation, and it gave me at least an understanding of morality, explaining my father to me and vivifying the meaning of the phrase " governing theory " which I heard with such constant iteration, and in due course I was " initiated " into the Humanist belief.

I trust it will not be inferred from this sketch of religious education that I was denied the right of imagination, or that only the tangible universe counted; what soul I had was absolutely free to wander where it pleased and gather what it could from the inexpressible powers of this world. As a matter of fact, I enjoyed unusual opportunities of exercising my brain, for art enthusiasm is an essential part of the Humanist religion, and I must have heard an unusual amount of discussion on architecture, painting, music, sculpture, and books, all calculated to stimulate the imagination. Perhaps the pace was too hot in that direction. Yet I was never " stuffed " and emerged as abysmally ignorant a " barbarian " as most youngsters, which at least disposes of the notion that the Positivist home denoted a sort of cramming institution. Far from it. My father abhorred cramming. There was no pressure. There was nothing depressing about my father's spirituality. He was not sterner on Sunday than on any other day. And the fact that he lectured in his ordinary clothes made him seem pleasingly accessible.

Perhaps I did miss prayer. I don't suggest that I was conscious of this omission, but the humility of prayer is a form of soul-ecstasy few men are strong enough to dispense with, and I think it is good for a boy to be able to fall on his knees, as it is assuredly for us all. I had no prayer of this kind. When I was quite young I believe I

did say the usual prayers, embracing the family, and we had a form of Grace at table, yet I had no supplication. I find it difficult to write about this here. It is the act of kneeling that matters, and we did not kneel. I am inclined to think it stiffens a boy not to feel that there is some ideal or conception before which self in its littleness must needs incline, and there is, in Positivism, a real difficulty in this respect. To kneel to humanity is a fine ideal, to kneel to "subject" woman as the soul of humanity (according to Comte) is surely a contradiction, which, I fear, betrays an insufficient knowledge in Comte of man's nature, since one does not venerate an "inferiority."* In the industrial era, man is less likely than ever to kneel to mankind, and if he does not, he cannot truly pray; he cannot, if only for one brief instant, escape from the consciousness of this world and claim that self-renewal which cleanses the soul.

I think, too, prayer humiliates wisely. It levels the lowly and the great, and imparts to everyone a spirit truce which the man who does not pray forgoes. I am not thinking preternaturally, but if we have a soul it is perhaps as well to fortify it and promote its every vibration. I do not know why Humanists have no form of prayer, no act of kneeling invocation. Not to pray is to stay too persistently in and with oneself, and perhaps to run even a certain danger of self-sufficiency and self-confinement. As a boy, I used to wonder at the people praying in churches, for I had the feeling that I could not, and I wondered how they felt. I don't mean more than that. Prayer, of course, is apt to become a mere formalism and a routine of self-interest: and it often is merely an act of superstition. Adoration is not prayer, by which I mean escape from oneself. The act of intense vibrational living. A process of getting out and beyond one's own confinement. In a word, the rapture of humility.

It is perhaps owing to that neglect of emotionalism,

*I ought to explain this word. Woman is obviously regarded as an "inferiority" under any religious system which denies her civic rights.

rather curious in Comte, who placed the heart in the foreground of his philosophy, that Positivists have been accused of a certain arrogance, though I think that this defect, or whatever it is that critics imply, springs far more from the opposition they have had to contend with than from any inner conceit. People who reject what is commonly believed are prone to a form of intellectual detachment chiefly because they are necessarily thrown upon the defensive, and it is quite likely that a boy who is taught to reject becomes somewhat more critical than he should be. There may be a danger in such latitude, at least, Voltaire thought so. Cynicism is never constructive. It is enthusiasm that a boy needs. The young Positivist is perhaps too cognate to the world. I think for a long while I was. I mean that as I emerged out of childhood I became too apt to assume. One does not kindle in a state of reasonableness. To put it vulgarly, one is inclined to say "That's that," which is a hopeless condition of mind, out of which no creativeness springs. I was apt to regard things too much as settled. I became too little curious, too quenched. After all, life is movement. The knowledge of one epoch is displaced by the knowledge of the next. Only continuity persists. That, of course, is the historical idea underlying Humanism. But one does not think of continuity, at the time. One cannot fall on one's knees to continuity, and the consequence is that one is inclined to be content with what one has—which is not always a soulful inducement. I throw this out not as a criticism but by way of suggestion.

Once at school, while we were stumbling over an involved passage in scripture, the master called upon me to explain it, saying, "I believe you are a Positivist," and subsequently I found myself compelled to explain Positivism. The result was startling. One of the boys settled the matter: "By Jove! you are a rank atheist. Does your father know it?"

That was the sort of thing Positivists, of course, have had to contend with. I always felt I had to be on my guard,

just as, in those days at any rate, one had to be on one's guard at school over French—if one had such a thing as an accent, which was regarded as an "effeminacy." It made one careful, and I cannot be surprised if Positivists of forty and thirty years ago acquired, out of natural sensitiveness, a defensive armoury. That is (or was) the worst of religion—it brings out the human element so emphatically. Years later I had a conversation with my father over this matter in connection with our Sunday attendance at church, which he insisted upon when we lived in the country. "If we don't believe," I said, "why do we go?" "It is better," said my father; "we might offend people if we didn't go." My reply caused trouble. I said, "But are we offensive, then?" for such appeared to me to be the deduction. When I look back and think of those admirable men and women who attended Newton Hall, and of the extraordinary high standard of education many of them attained to, I cannot but feel what an inestimable boon Humanism was to them and how brave was their devotion. One may truly say that Humanism gave all these people a notable self-respect.

Without the personality of my father, I question whether Humanism would have survived the onslaughts of its detractors in this country, certainly if he had not linked up with the founding group of Newton Hall and cast into the movement the whole of his energy, it could hardly have survived the lethargy and opposition encountered. The story of Newton Hall is his, after the rather lamentable secession of Dr. Congreve. And for twenty years this work absorbed him. For it, he put every other interest aside. He set to work to teach and influence precisely as prescribed by Comte, and it is astonishing to think that a large section of his regular audience were working-men and women. A Labour member said to me a few years ago, "What a pity it is that your father is no longer interested in us!" But such was not the case. My father's interest in the proletariat was personal and sociological. But foremost in his thoughts was always religion. He

could never have been an active Labour man as Positivist, for Humanism is more than a policy, it is a philosophy. That was his difficulty. Often he had to appear not to sympathize. In the power-design of Comte, force was not the qualifying instrument; mere policy, therefore, or power, was not the liberating mechanism and could not be in any religious sociology. My father was never a Socialist even in his fighting public days; and it may legitimately be questioned whether anyone at that time in England realized the meaning of Communism referred to, from its sociological aspect, in Comte's works. My father was a jurist by training. Law and order were implicit in his mind. Intellectually, he remained all his life an evolutionist.

As a boy, I remember the strange (as I thought it) fascination that churches had for my father, and once in some French town he sent my brother and me outside the cathedral while he remained with my mother, listening to the chanted prayers, and they must have sat, or perhaps knelt, there well over an hour. This love of music or musical atmosphere may have led to the introduction of singing at Newton Hall with its slight indication (it was never more than that) of ritual which many people sneered at. I don't know why, yet I, too, always rather disliked the introduction of hymns; I think probably the reason for this vocal offering lay in the difficulty of interesting women in a service of mere " dry light." Why women are supposed to like singing in church so much, I never could explain, for men are the musicians of the world, and in a Catholic church the congregation do not sing, yet it no doubt helped at Newton Hall and not a few women sang there, who were not Positivists. Newton Hall was really an educational institution, and the " classes " led to astonishing results. I don't suppose the teachers of any church ever got nearer to the hearts of their community than my father and the group around him. It was essentially a religious communism in spirit, and personally I always felt more inspired there than in any other place of worship.

I used to wonder as a youth whether my father was not " wasting his time " over such work, for he seemed to me to be destined for greater things. For example, literature. It is certain that he would have written more in his earlier days but for his religious scruples, and he might have done more creative and historical work had his time and his mind been freer. But now I can see that this was a superficial view which left out of account my father's nature which would not permit him to see life from a non-religious angle, or even to take an active part in life, which did not harmonize with his principles. My father's " fury " was not that of the artist to whom art is religion, hence his distrust of æstheticism. He could never have been contented with a contemplative life, or one of worldly self-importance, and this feeling was so strong in him that even as a writer he avoided the æsthetics of style except as regards clarity of thought and expression. The moral bent was so powerful that writing to him signified teaching, and he had little real sympathy for any form of literature which was not so conceived.

The danger of such an attitude is obvious in art: it imposes limitations. I can remember when Whistler's monochromes were discussed as " immoral," as were Ibsen, Tolstoi, Swinburne and Walter Pater. This attitude is undoubtedly Victorian, and great credit is due to Tennyson for the fastidious skill with which he managed to steer clear of the hidden rocks of controversy, and partly that is the explanation of my father's great admiration of him.

Clearly, this is my father's contribution to his time. It is interesting in this respect to compare Lord Morley on John Stuart Mill with my father's essay (published in " Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill and others "); interesting because Morley was a disciple of Mill and Mill was the real introducer of Humanism into England. My father boggled at " The Subjection of Woman," but his estimate is surely wider, surer and clearer than that of Morley, and I think this is due to the difference in moral indignation of

the two men, who were so completely of their age and of its temper. John Morley was too suave and pliant to suffer religious compunction, and was not of the stamp of the martyr. My father was. I fancy his friend's rise to worldly fame somewhat perplexed him—he who had written in connection with Mill's monetary support of Comte that it may be doubted whether an " endowment is ever a blessing to the man who receives it." For in character these two Victorians were wholly different. Lord Morley was never a Crusader and never a Positivist; he had taken Mill's view of the " Polity " and was more philosophically agnostic than my father, and always infinitely more practical. I once had a *tête-à-tête* luncheon with Lord Morley and in a leisurely abstract way he sauntered through his life. " I have no frenzy," he told me, " and my social enthusiasm has little of the splendid vision of your father who is an emotionalist." But there was no short cut in life. He had entered politics " without illusions " and he had " not regretted the sacrifice." It was useless to attempt " sudden reformation " or " reformatory rebellion." There was no such thing as progress " by force, or book, or candle." Only " stages " mattered and it was idle to be in advance of one's time. Comte had thought to impose a system of culture without taking sufficient account of human nature, and his system was not conducive to individualism. There was no " theodolite of spirituality " and no divinity point of human theory, and he saw no reason to condemn the instrument that he had selected and no practical utility in not making use of it. " We parted company," he said, " on that issue. I can do more good—in life; your father can do more good—through books. I try to lead men, your father wishes to reform them."

The conversation passed into politics and particularly upon Germany, and I was astonished to find how " unrealistic " (as I thought) his views were about Germany's attitude (this was in 1909) and how far more he leaned towards Goethe than towards Comte. A three hours' talk

with Morley was a delightful experience, yet as I left him I could not help wondering what had brought him and my father so closely together and kept them together in the face of such divergent temperamental and philosophical complexities, and what a tribute it was to their friendship that they could always meet and listen to one another and disagree with such benevolent and contented sincerity. No two men could be more unlike, and no two men were more characteristic of a solemn epoch of commanding and liberating reason.

My father would not have been happy except as a Crusader. Life to him signified moral purpose, and it had to be lived accordingly. On this point there was no golden means of compromise, and occasionally my father would call for "boiling oil," like any other fanatical religionist; but I put this down to temperament, for I can find nothing about "punishment" in Comte's "Polity."

It always seemed a little strange to me that so fierce an individualist and so profound a thinker as my father should have merged his personality so completely in the thought of Comte, and I can only account for it on the ground of Faith, which happened to synchronize with his intellectual equipment. Most people do not seek intellectual satisfaction in religion. It was the acting spirit of Comte's Philosophy that appealed so irresistibly to him, with its full and buoyant practicality, thus differentiating the "Polity" from a mere philosophy of speculation or inactivity. My father once told me that Comte had given the world an opportunity of proving the unnecessity of a doctrine of retribution, and he added, "if you believe that you are a Positivist." This is where the artist in him was absorbed and supplemented by the moralist. His curiosity ceased at the function of ethics, and beyond that he was, superstitiously or supernaturally, uninterested. This, no doubt denotes a limitation which, however, he recognized and accepted. It placed him in a spiritual harness, so to speak, perhaps to the detriment of his full intellectual qualities. As he himself put it: A man who does not

believe in a Heaven must surely believe in humanity, since we are only promised the one as the reward of the other. He took his stand on earth. He had to try to right things, as well as to think. It was not sufficient to him to cry out: " Here is the good philosophy; take it or leave it." The philosophy had to be manifested. The whole man had to be its demonstration. A morality so hard and lucid is not compatible with meekness, and his humility lay in that attestation.

Chapter X

THE HAPPY HUMANIST

THE flame of religious ecstasy, with the crowning exception of Him who said, " Suffer the little children to come unto me," would seem to have a limiting effect upon the individual, which I have frequently observed in strong spiritually-minded men and was apparent in my father. I suppose all passion is enslavement, so relative is everything; and all feeling provokes counter-feeling and, indeed, is only reasonable on that account, and probably this is the explanation of that singular association in men of religious piety with the ferocity of the stake. The fire within lights the fire without. There must be application, punishment, fear, retribution; it is not enough to save oneself. " Save a soul and win your own," such is the formula which has a plausible ring and commends itself lightly to those who have the retributive sentiment; but it is not a doctrine that makes for harmony, and so the soul of the religious man is a troubled one and he rarely ceases from troubling.

Yet if my father exhibited a moral austerity that caused difficulties, he must certainly be spoken free from all psychagogic tendencies. He kept no dormant faculties, he sought no automatic results. He was quite unlike his type, such as the father of John Stuart Mill, who saw life with the severe, relentless sorrow of a Scottish Covenanter, or even as George Eliot who in a memorable passage is described as having sifted down the emotions to a Sibylline cry of " Duty." There was no gloom in my father's orbit

and no conscientious pedantry. His morality, however formidable and concentric, was not of the relentless brand which excluded joy. If it stood in the foreground of his being, defiant and perhaps challenging, it was always disinterested; always, so to speak, personal, directed and contained and even somewhat diffident of its own communication. My father had no proselytizing instinct, and I question whether he ever tried to convert anyone in his life. In this regard his religious content was singularly calm, candid and self-sufficient. His stern morality was not selfish, and he himself was not of the kind whose continence lies in rejection. He did not seek to impose it upon others, and he did not condemn those who lacked his standards and scruples. Nor did he *distrust.* His religious feeling was neutral, by which I mean that it did not take the form of magnanimous grief for the errors of mankind, nor did he wring his hands over the panorama of human folly. His own logic was strictly scientific, though he was not a scientific man and did not possess the scientific spirit, still, it was never obtrusive; indeed, he invariably shrunk from all manner of manifestation and anything in the nature of social dramatization either of himself or of his religion.

I do not imply that he was not addicted to the habit of intellectual castigation; he enjoyed an epistolary bout and had at one time a weakness for controversial exchange. The Victorians were not effete. He was a born critic and was nurtured in the school of Carlyle, and it was a time when vehemence of disapproval was a fashion. The Victorians, especially the moralists, were intolerant of levity and entertained a stern dislike of paradox. They pitched their tents on the quest of truth and gave little quarter to superficiality. The seer had his definite place in those days. He was supposed to be decisive and to know how and when to strike. My father was entirely orthodox in that respect. He could growl and swing words at random, as was the custom, but spiritually this was not so. His mind worked in terms of order, arrangement, syn-

thesis. Always reason first. He was the embodiment of common sense. Forbearance may not have been a leading characteristic, yet even his intolerance was critical; his anathemas were not part of his doctrine, so that even to us he would say: "I cannot forbid you to read that disgusting print, *Ally Sloper*, for I do not believe in prohibitions; I can only advise you to avoid the mud which generally lurks in the gutter."

Ally Sloper, therefore, could be read, and was, I fear, read even in his presence. My father was intolerant of people who liked flippancies and trivialities and would express his opinion upon such tastes in eighteenth-century language, but as moralist he had curiously little zeal to reform men's minds by legislation or compulsion, and though he believed implicity in the force of example, he was no schoolmaster, least of all a bigot. He combined a trained earnestness of mind with a natural joyfulness which prevented him from suffering from the common complaint of moral intellectualism which so often takes the form either of a grotesque egotism or of splenetic indignation. Pedantry, preciosity, æstheticism, all form of ornamentation, he disliked; nor was he a literary snob, a bookworm or an "intellectual" in the sense generally understood. He preferred to regard himself as a commoner who lived like any other "decent member of society" and rather prided himself on being neither a pundit nor a prelate—this was his social republicanism of mind. And this geniality of bearing was no affectation. It was of his nature. No man ever lived further away from sackcloth and ashes. All eccentrictiy was repugnant to him, and all outward show. His Positivism was radiantly personal. He did not wear it on his sleeve. Needless to say, he detested anything in the shape of a badge or ribbon or button. My father in a cowl would have been an anomaly. He was really at his best walking down Piccadilly in a broad-brimmed Victorian "topper."

Perhaps for that reason, since a man cannot be everything, his mind was not subtle or sentient, and he had

little of the impressionism or perceptiveness of the novelist for all his passionate love of poetry, his instinct for beauty, his worship of form, his feeling for nature. His appreciation was unsensuous though deep and instinctive; it was a product of training, of application, of culture. His passion for art in all its forms and branches was like a beautiful intelligence into which he appeared to have grown and in which he laved for sheer spiritual joy; it was not a quivering emotion of the senses, nor was it a sensuous æstheticism such as inspired Ruskin's early work. I always thought of my father as the supreme example of education rather than of inspiration. He loved beauty because of the moral force that creates all beauty.

But art was not his passion. His dominant, naturally and intellectually, was religion, in the truest sense of which word he was saturated. He literally was soul-proof. I used to marvel at his iron-clad purity of mind, so resolute and true that even as a boy, and a boy can see through most men, I could never imagine my father ever thinking or saying a foul thing or ever having fallen a victim to the temptations of the flesh, and I do not believe that he ever did. That is the feeling I always had about him. I felt that he was in some inscrutable way soul-armoured, and that this health and cleanliness of spirit was perfectly natural in him, differentiating and contrasting him and giving him the right to ordain. And strange to say, there seemed nothing odd about this singularity—perhaps because of the happy strength of his bearing. He did not flaunt his virtues. I did not feel that he was an especially "good man." I simply felt that he could not be otherwise. An absolute wholesomeness seemed to form part of his vitality. His chastity of thought was not acquired; it was inherent. It exuded from him, like the clear male resonance of his voice.

Such purity, I fancy, must be hard, just as is crystal. My father's hardness was like that, coming from the clarity of conscience and from the hot flush of purpose, and it was so sure that there seemed no conscious merit

in its expression. It was present without effort, without ordination. I cannot imagine my father ever hesitating between good and evil in the ordinary sense of those terms. His morality was athletic, and never out of training.

That this crystalline sense of social duty made him somewhat contemptuous of the frailty of mankind is intelligible enough, and it also limited his imagination. He sometimes admitted that. The urge of art creation recognizes no dimensions; its compass is space. It was there that my father stopped and made his sacrifice; and when he shut out speculative doubt from the ken and joyfulness of human divination, he foreclosed, perhaps deliberately, perhaps naturally, and I rather fancy both, his account with a world which most men, if only for the sake of their dreams and of a few brief intervals of escape, prefer to keep open.

Part of his indifferentism and withheld sympathy were due to this sense of righteousness, which was entirely natural in him. It placed him in opposition. He was on the defensive in art, thus he could not make allowances. His mind was " made up." The critic became a judiciary. It made him strong, but it undoubtedly made him didactic.

This attitude—it was not a pose—is curious, seeing that civilization owes practically all to the freedom of thought and of word, and that art, as Comte recognized, first broke through the wooden walls of theological absolutism. But having once decided upon his course, my father could not swerve, and he had a good deal of the " bull-dog " breed which classified him even in the land of Puritanism.

Moreover, he was essentially an authoritarian, and it was in this sense that he differed from Mill. He believed in law and in the enforcement of law. I think he temperamentally felt that the good of mankind needed management and that all varieties of the doctrine of *laissez-faire* were weak and evil. Humanitarianism alone did not necessarily better humanity; more than " right feeling " was required. Leaders were required, and standards and up-

holders of standards. One had to choose. He had chosen. His moral climacteric had been decided long before I was old enough to judge of things, and it had cast him in the direction of religious duty as the paramount business of life. That meant everything to him, for he had given up everything for it. Not as a sacrifice, not in any sense as an act of deference or humility, but on the contrary as a joyful acquisition, as a doctrinal acclamation of service, which was what religion implied to him. All else became secondary. There was always the smack of a Cromwellian jackboot about him, and theoretically, too, he was pugnacious; but those who knew him soon learnt to appraise this outward severity: my father could never have burned anybody, not even the luminaries who burned St. Joan.

Intellectually, my father was the exact opposite of, let us say, Henry James, whose quality of mental detachment, which enabled him to take "no sort of interest" in history, politics, social science or "results," was to my father incomprehensible. My father's religious interests lay in realities, whereas Henry James was an artist in words and meanings and their derivatives. Henry James was quite peculiar in his worldly aloofness. He hardly scanned the newspapers. He seemed to live in a pasture world of everlasting daffodils in which he was his own rainbow, and once as I walked home with him after a dinner which he said had bored him utterly he spoke of my father and called him a "turbulent" man who really and for perfectly moral considerations ought to smoke at least six pipes a day. I rather objected to the word "turbulent," but Henry James politely insisted. "No, you see, he wants to hitch mankind to moral precepts and—interfere; and I always feel as if he would like to lecture me about my lack of social instinct."

This was partly true, but I felt I could not accept such a verdict, and I protested that religion itself was a turbulent remedy and that Positivism meant social conduct. Mr. Henry James put his arm through mine and we sauntered

along Oxford Street, which is hardly a congenial thoroughfare for philosophic discussion at night, and he began to talk about the " fascinating " problem of the man who seeks to " save others." I can recall only fragments, yet a few sentences linger in my mind. Positivism was a kind of " moral Socialism inspired by a modern Caligula, which lacked imagination, for Comte knew nothing about women and thought of them like a Catholic priest." He himself thought life " far more interesting than its regularization," and though my father was " tremendously interesting " to him as type, as examplar and as man, he thought it was better to be a bee sucking the honey of flowers than a man who would reform a world which did not want to be reformed. Mr. Henry James became eloquent and finally asked me to come in and " talk the thing out," and now I regret that I refused, which seemed to astonish him not a little. He might have told me some memorable things, but I was still ravenous of life at the time and wanted to go on to a dance where I anticipated a " higher " rapture. Henry James thought this motive at midnight " extraordinary." And so I did not hear the final and considered judgment. The word " turbulent " probably does fit my father who certainly had the social frenzy though not the fanatical one, and Mr. James must have had an access of conscience when he attributed any such proclivity to my father who, whatever his shortcomings, certainly never approached a fellow being with a tract, and was the most uninterfering of religious men. The truth is that his manner was irritable. He quite lacked the suavity of Lord Morley, for example, and he rather enjoyed a verbal contest.

Also, he was apt to think aloud, as men do who live much alone. But his vehemence of manner did not imply vehemence of opinion, though this, too, could be forcible. When he dismissed a fellow as a " low blackguard," he did not mean this literally, it was a form of speech, a Victorian form of dismissal. I can well understand people objecting. I once knew a schoolmaster who consistently

consigned all boys he did not like to the " gallows." The Victorians were rhetorical and emphatic, perhaps because they had such excellent and docile servants, and nothing annoyed my father more than a man whose opinions were fluid, flaccid and neutral. Still, he had the " door-mat " habit. The front-door was bolted in his day, and Henry James with his sweet New England neutrality felt, I imagine, ruffled in the presence of my father's robust and characteristically European tempestuosity.

My father was a man of abrupt inclinations and wholly deliberate decisions. No one was ever less theoretical, less " misty " or more comprehensible. Despite the cultivated alacrity of his mind, he had no hobby; he never " took up " things and dropped them, not even photography, and he never attempted any parlour accomplishments. On his walks, he liked to keep an acorn to roll about in his mouth, otherwise a blade of grass, a daisy, or anything green sufficed, but never tobacco. He was perfectly simple, like all big minds, and in addition he was so sensible that he was positively disconcerting. Not Juno herself could have lured him to bet on a horse, to pass an evening at a music-hall, to play a game of " patience " or to stroll into a public-house and order a whisky and soda. Perhaps he was partly " terrifying " on the score of sobriety. The " other " side of life had no attractions for him. It was not that he disapproved of horse-racing, betting, cards, comedians, or whiskies and sodas; such things did not attract him, that is all, any more than did motor-cars or bicycles, or girls dressed up as boys at Drury Lane. Yet he was not " superior," as we say. He had no mock-religious prudery, and he was too physically healthy to be smug. His eliminations derived from standards that were natural and constitutional. He decidedly lacked what a small boy in my youth once surprised me by calling the " curiosity sense," yet I don't believe that Aristotle himself could have induced him to get through breakfast in the morning without a glance at *The Times*.

How gracious and considerate he often was ! When

I was about eighteen I was called out of bed very early in the morning to go to the bedside of a friend of mine who had sent for me and was dying, and as I hurriedly dressed and wondered about this horrible and unexpected thing, death, which it seemed impossible to associate with one so young and strong and vital as my friend, my father entered the room with a candle and, placing his hand upon my shoulder, spoke with a calm sympathy that astonished me, so that when I left the house I knew I could face what was to me a very painful ordeal. He had moments of splendid presence and adaptability, and he always rose to the occasion. I felt I could invariably rely upon his help in a crisis, nor did any one of " us " ever appeal to him in vain.

These elements of greatness in him were quite instinctive. On several occasions in my youth I had opportunities to plumb the depth of his nature and catch the strength of his being. At such times, he appeared unusually grave yet alight with sincerity. He was no longer hasty and irascible. The eyes were like steel and his voice acquired a deep resonance. One could not escape the meaning and truth of him. His concentration swept back upon one and re-established proportions. Then his power was immanent. It lay in his intense reality.

The difference in the " reality " of men is remarkable, and often one searches for it vainly. Henry James—one incontinently drifts back to that gentle mellow figure—to me always seemed to be entirely unreal and a kind of intellectual ruminant with his innumerable " affections " which served him for the most part as a sort of literary exercise in " observed " and " felt " companionship. But no ladies " hung on " the lips of my father, though occasionally letters of delirious worship would come from America where he evidently had two or three highly inflammable disciples. I once asked one of these Henry James lady worshippers what it was she so idolized since she admitted that she could not understand his prose, and he professed his inability to understand her poetry, and her

answer impressed me. She said, and she was a widely-travelled woman, twice married and hoping to be married again, " his mastery of the indefinite is so attractive to us women, for it is our own condition and resourcefulness "; and when I objected that it was the conquering male that women were supposed to prefer, she replied sedately that the hero of melodrama was only a virgin's rapture, whereas Henry James was an acquired, mellow and developed taste which had " infinite possibilities." A woman would never run after " your father," she continued; " he is too strong, too revealed, too obvious, too safe, but James," and she sighed and clasped her hands, " he is as elusive as a woman and more interpretive than a man and he, too, is safe—only deliciously so, in our woman's sense, and the more we fall in love with him the further away he seems to be. He is like a Chinese torture to the observed and interested woman of his attentions. But your father is John Bull. ' Are you ready, are you steady,' etc. A masterly personality. A full man who is always a little dull to incarnate woman. A symbol of morality. A man who cracks whips."

" And what does Henry James crack ? " I inquired, " hardly jokes ? " She saw I was a bit nettled and smiled. " No, neither jokes nor skulls. His charm to woman consists in his unrelationship. We know the splendid male, the master and tyrant, the other male is the more fascinating. The difference is delightful. For instance, I could offend, shock, annoy, distress and flabbergast your father utterly in five minutes, but the more I tried to offend, shock, distress or flabbergast Henry James, the more disinterestedly sympathetic he would appear and the more remote. Morality is not exciting. I am not sure that it is always intellectual."

But enough of Henry James and his incarnate adorer. Her comparison so interested me at the time that I took to reading the novelist's books; and I understood after that why ladies did not swarm into Newton Hall and talk synthetic philosophy with my father across the tea-table.

It was, as this lady said, easy to annoy, offend and shock my father. He did crack whips. He certainly shed moral values and affected full-stops. My father had an opinion upon everything and upon every other opinion. Henry James " thanked Heaven that he had no opinions." Hence in the drawing-room, my father never acquired the position, or the vogue, or the fascination of the man who was " master of the indefinite "; and though the truly magnificent adoration, loyalty and fulness of Mrs. Hertz will remain unforgettable to all who knew this wise and bountiful lady patron of Positivism and of my father, it must be conceded that the Humanist religion of conduct did not attract the women who always appeared to be a little bit afraid—though this is not the proper word, for women are not afraid of men—of my father: who was inclined to be a little bit afraid—and in this case the word is apposite—of them. The reverse may be said of Henry James. His admiring women were just a little bit afraid, or perhaps afraid to be afraid, that he might descend into the Agora of sexual combat and disillusion them, and it will remain his permanent masterpiece that he never did step down from Olympus, so far as tradition records. As a boy, I used to long to see a duchess in sables walk into Newton Hall, or some wholly exquisite female, but I doubt if we ever captured anything above a stray peeress; the exquisite ladies seemed to prefer Farm Street where I took to going later on—to see them. The nymphs of Mayfair left Fetter Lane, where the Positivists congregated, severely alone, and yet my father was the only man in England who wanted to return the Greek statuary, taken away by Lord Elgin, to Greece ! We certainly did not win many women's souls. Alas ! we had no mystery, or as a smart woman who once sat next to me whispered behind her muff: " It lacks variety." My father had the steadfast quality, and perhaps was lacking in variety. He was always the same and all through the years. He had no manifestly weak spot and he was unthinkable in any other capacity than as moralist, always, so to speak, in white

armour. But not the tilting type, and he never charged windmills. Not that he harboured any moral antipathy to pretty girls, he was rather partial to them and admittedly susceptible to feminine beauty which he spotted unerringly; yet somehow he never had a rapt "circle" and I never saw "society" beauties sit on his knee while he read poetry or sociology to them, as befell Tennyson, for example; I fancy he gave an impression of fierceness that kept anything in the nature of paternal or bardic intimacy at arm's length, and in that respect my father's life from a biographical point of view *y manqua quelque chose*. He was quite unhistrionic and lacked all aptitude for affectation. He was not "in ethics" because of a good manner or of a felicitous expression: his Positivism was tremendously serious and applicable, and the ladies of the Victorian epoch seemed to find that difficult and, I fear, tiresome.

None the less, he himself was a *schwaermer* or hero-worshipper. For men whom he admired, such as Lord Rosebery, (President) Roosevelt, Herbert Spencer, Lord Morley, A. J. Mundella, Sir Frederick Pollock and many others, he had an almost boyish enthusiasm, and had it not been for what a man once described to me as the "Positivist streak," which seemed to set up the semblance of a shadow between friendship and familiarity, my father with his keenness and born aptitude for sociability would probably have been a highly "popular" figure in the world which governed the England of his time in Pall Mall. He had that pleasing faculty of actually being proud of the people he liked and of being able to show it. He was just as enthusiastic about women; thus, of George Eliot, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Mrs. W. K. Clifford, Sarah Grand, and he carried these enthusiasms into every feature of life, for surely never was a man more full of natural spirits and of *bien-être*. Every sunset was as "perfect" as the last. Wherever he settled, he found the scenery superb. He had none of the sorrowfulness and pessimism so often associated with spiritual intensity and

none of the awkwardness of intellectualism. Everything, to use a current expression, was " quite all right," and anyone who " groused " met with a volcanic interruption with suitable adjectives. He hated obsequiousness and he hated flunkery. A favourite expression of his was " now, look sharp there." He himself was physically incapable of lolling in a hammock, doing nothing. His mind was always active. He never idled, strolled, or lazed about. On a ship, he read. He was always reading. I once told him I was " fagged," and he could not understand it. " Better go to bed," he said. My father's early introspective difficulties, which were no doubt real enough, certainly never obtruded themselves after his marriage. He seemed like a man who had banned psychology and looked out on life with an almost menacing optimism which was all the more strident because of his petty alarmism over the trifles of everyday existence. He was like iron all through the war, yet he would become " seriously troubled " if a butterfly flew into his library and he could not catch it, but he was good with wasps which he slew deftly with a book, though I once saw him hesitate over a large hornet in France, which insisted upon investigating the perfume of the particular French hair-wash he affected, yet I believe the second volume of Comte's " Philosophy " eventually settled the career of that animal, on the window-pane.

Positivism, as a religion of conduct, inevitably compels a man to take sides and quite particularly in the political sphere, and my father found himself constantly at loggerheads with general opinion. He came through this ordeal with remarkable distinction, for it is not easy to oppose the march of events and yet remain respected. This was due to his complete sincerity which also accounted for his wide circle of friends. My father knew everybody, so to speak, in all classes. He was equally at home at a supper given by his friend, the late Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, at His Majesty's, as he was at Oxford, or at Manchester, as examiner to the Bar, in Fleet Street, or at Guildhall

dinners and in the rooms of a workmen's meeting as a Trades Unionist, and he was a member of the *cordon bleu* in Paris as cook.

My father was eminently sociable and at one period quite a " diner out." His loyalty to all his friends was proverbial.

He would never listen to a hostile word against a friend. Indeed, his faith was sometimes touching, for often he was tried in his beliefs and in his heroes, and only too often disappointed, yet I never knew him to turn on a man, and he would countenance no denigration of anyone behind his back. His lifelong attachment to his Positivist friends was almost a superstition with him, and he never wearied of praising them. As a boy, I used to regard this body-elect with some annoyance, so intense was my father's zeal and affection, and he would follow their every utterance with unstinted admiration. He was never jealous though quick to resent any attack, however mild. To whole numbers of people all over the world, of both sexes, black, yellow and white, and of quite different denominations, he stood like a faithful shepherd holding the crook of wisdom in his hand, pointing the way. No one ever questioned his truth, his sincerity, or his motives. His meaning, whether it was approved or not, was wholly patent, and again, whether approved or not, his aim was always sun clear. He certainly never " sat on the fence," as it is called, in the course of a very long and contentious career.

My father's unshakable support of the French Communards, which seemed so strange to some people, was Republican in spirit and no doubt logical as a disciple of Comte, though French Positivists disassociated themselves from them at the time, and my father had no sort of sympathy with the Bolshevists fifty years later. But France was my father's elective affinity and he never could tolerate any depreciation of the land which had given to Europe the political " liberty " of 1879, the Encyclopædists, Joan of Arc, Condorcet and Comte. This was an article of faith with him. His attachment to France

was personal as well as religious, in that it undoubtedly derived from Comte and his contention that Protestantism had impeded the intellectual progress of the West by consolidating metaphysics, whereas France had proved her greatness by leaping at one stride from theocratic feudalism to freedom of thought, so taking the lead in the common movement of social emancipation under the iconoclastic flail of Voltaire.

I never could help finding my father's attitude to be somewhat illogical in view of his pronounced English sex Puritanism, which caused him to be a tremendous hero-worshipper of Cromwell and of William the Silent, and his specifically Protestant anathemas which virtually embraced all French fiction, most of the French modern stage and much of the essential wit and spirit of the French, and indeed included Voltaire's own metaphysical detraction of the Maid of Orleans and even the warm, lucent Paganism of Anatole France. France was my father's historical land of pilgrimage made almost sacrosanct through Comte. He had travelled extensively all over the country, studied all the cathedrals, and knew historical Paris as few Frenchmen know it. The very word " Bastille " evoked in him a pious sentiment, and I think it was that feeling of reverence for *la grande nation* which prevented him from active championship of Dreyfus. I need hardly say how attached he was to his French Positivist friends, many of whom were remarkable men; and it was the French Positivists who promoted the agitation which led to the canonization of Joan of Arc. In France, with her freedom of thought, her Republicanism and regenerating genius, my father saw the clear logical impulse best suited to define and spread the sociology of Comte, and perhaps the most hopeful instrument to evolve a salving mean in the war between Capital and Labour.

Despite my father's Hibernian ardour and, *per contra*, his Puritanical rigour, his Victorian heritage, and his swift spiritual instinct of reform and progress, he remained always

an individualist, and was so even in his tempestuous days before he settled down to marriage and literature. Thus, in 1871, he declined to accept Guizot's warm invitation to visit him on the ground that the " old man " was a " severe Puritan and a rigid Conservative," which would seem on the face of it a queer reason, all the more in that it precisely reflects my father's own composite outlook, though perhaps not so appositely at that time. My father was a quasi-rebel by nature, yet a Conservative and a Puritan by instinct; he was always and above both nature and instinct himself, an independent, an isolation. And he remained isolated all through his life, invariably holding in reserve his right of judgment on grounds of strict moral principle.

Thus, publicly, he tasted the sweets of both popularity and unpopularity, chiefly, of course, the latter. In a political democracy such as ours, it is relatively easy to be popular, it requires considerable moral courage to be unpopular. My father certainly had his share of disfavour, and, what was particularly annoying to him, of intellectual derision. He never acquired the schoolboy's facility for taking chaff, though he had a curious facility for courting it. His extreme sanity was perhaps a disability, as it prevented him from taking any practical advantage of the tide even when it flowed with him. Still, a philosopher cannot expect approbation, and perhaps the only time in which he can be said to have been really popular was during the War, when he ranged himself wholly and unfalteringly on the side of France, exactly as he had in 1870 when, by the way, educated opinion in this country rather favoured Germany.

I think I must say a few words about my mother, who so fully shared my father's life and was in all essentials the very calendar of his being. He was virtually engaged to her when she was still in the schoolroom, and he often used to say that he had " educated " her into his belief. It was a marriage of absolute oneness of thought and feeling. My mother, too, was naturally religious. I cannot

conceive of any union more spiritually and progressively harmonious. Her life was an exquisitely-shared communion of interest and enthusiasm, imparting to my father the exact meed of help that his nature required with the association of idea and sympathy that he found most stimulating. She literally grew up as a child with him, sensitive to his every vibration, yet possessing tact and strength of character sufficient to develop her own individuality and materially to assuage and influence him.

He consulted her upon all occasions. She read his manuscripts, and curbed certain of his natural extravagances of utterance. She was in a rare sense his friend, counsellor and companion. They lived quite simply as one heart. The creative side of my father's life began with her. It would hardly have taken the same even course without her. If such a marriage is to-day styled Victorian, it was, at any rate, romance. Almost beautifully old-fashioned perhaps; yet man and woman can reach no higher, for my mother was equally happy in its common fulfilment. The romance of living is no mean art. My parents must certainly be accorded the palm for that achievement. In an accord of individually distinctive contrasts, their several portions were complete and one.

If life is effort, my father's certainly was that. He was like a torrent of restless industry. He did not dwell in the ordinary world of results, or profit and loss. His love of Nature, of mountains and mountain air was Greek in its rapture if not exactly Pagan in appreciation. He liked the pipe of a shepherd on the hills better than any song, and the wail of an ocarina far more than the "Ride of the Valkyrie"; and the deep chant of priests in a church thrilled him more than any opera. He would rise at two a.m. to see a sunrise in the Alps, yet he hardly knew the names of a dozen flowers in his garden. I never saw him take up a spade and dig, like Maurice Hewlett, for example. He abominated onions, pastry and jams, and actually disliked most fruit: apples, gooseberries, grape-

fruit, even strawberries, all nuts, and I doubt if he ever ate an ice-cream after boyhood, or sucked a candy or drank a glass of beer. But on the snow and in forests, and in the silence and spaces of cathedrals he was entirely happy, as he was on the sea and in any open expanse. He could be contented anywhere, and was contented everywhere. His interests lay in the historical sense of things, in the great walls at Constantinople, in towers and temples, in statues and pictures—in the works of man and in the spirit of man. I once treated him to a lunch which began with caviare, and he pushed it aside and ordered cold meat.

I took him on one occasion to see Goethe's " Faust " in Germany. It seemed to puzzle him, yet nothing delighted him more than a play by Molière at the Français. The metaphysics of Goethe annoyed him; he said it was pantomimic and tiresome, and he " seriously objected " to the language. He was wholly un-German in intellect and sympathy, though, I think, mainly because of France, and perhaps for that reason could never appreciate the Scandinavians and the mystic lore of the North. " Peer Gynt," for instance, he regarded as barbaric.

In his own home, my father's life functioned by the clock. He invariably rose fresh and eager, and after breakfast retired to his room where he worked till luncheon. Afterwards, he walked. All meals had to be served to the minute, or he would be out in the hall, chafing and shouting. In the evenings he read, snoozed and read again. This punctiliousness and " reasonable " atmosphere was trying to his family, for he disliked small talk and had the Victorian idea of the respect due to the head of the family. Visitors sometimes found this intellectualism excessive, though my father was an admirable host and enjoyed nothing more than a good talk. None the less, " we " played cards, and there was nothing severe about this formalism, for one could always quit the room or go out and smoke or read. What was really irksome was his nervous irritability. This would cause him to leap about

in his armchair, and on those occasions it was advisable not to ask questions. But I don't think " we " suffered more than inconvenience from this " master in my own home " disciplinarianism. It was typically Victorian, and I had known houses more sedate than ours and infinitely more difficult for youth. Occasionally, I felt as if I should like to yell just for the sake of smashing every canon of propriety, but for many years I lived abroad and on my visits home the orderliness, intensity and routine calmness of my father's life rather soothed me after the Bohemianism I was accustomed to on the Continent.

Early in life, I had been sent " for my sins " to study in the house of a pious scholar, where things were " far worse." He, too, was a religious teacher, and unmarried. We began with prayers and we ended with prayers. In between, all was system. If a door banged, there was a rumpus. If it rained, life became fearsome. If the forks were not correctly placed on the table, socially the meal was a failure, and there were long graces before and after every meal. The house of this eminent divine was incomparably more chilling than life in our home, for my father was not a faddist, was never dispirited, and was so imperturbably well that the very sight of him did one good. A happy man is a heartening spectacle, and my father was always that. He slept " dead," and he could sleep anywhere and at any time. I never saw him look pale. He was apparently immune against germs. No tooth ever ached. He never took medicine. There he was, the first down in the morning and the last to go to bed, constant and splendid, physically and naturally in his own home *facile primus*.

I suppose no man ever wore great learning more easily. All pedantry was obnoxious to him, and anything in the nature of " tall talk " about art or books. Yet he was steeped in erudition of all kinds and never ceased accumulating knowledge. The first place he visited in a town abroad was the museum, where he would spend hours in rapt and studious examination, and then he would buy

the books and go through it again. He thrived on restless energy. The more museums there were the better he seemed pleased. Culture was part of his religion, and joy in culture was part of his nature. The fattest melon, the ripest peach, a whole bowl of iced pomegranates—such delights meant nothing to him, but the peak of the Matterhorn would move him almost to tears, and the Greek E of Haggia Sophia Church at Constantinople would fill his soul with ecstasy.

Perhaps the happiest period of his life was when his parents lived at the old Tudor House, Sutton Place, which was then far more wild and in some respects more picturesque than it is to-day with its now beautiful gardens and rebuilt wing. Up in the " long gallery " my father wrote the history of this manor house. He literally lived in its walls and stained-glass windows, and basked in the old-world atmosphere of the Italian terra-cotta workmanship that is such a unique attraction of this ancient country home of peace, which was never besieged or attacked, though most of its occupants somehow lost their heads on the block. The free run of this exquisite home with its beautiful grounds by the banks of a backwater of the river Wey, which he enjoyed at the turning-point of his career, was largely instrumental in deciding him to take up writing, and no doubt his father encouraged him to devote himself to letters rather than to politics for which his temperament was obviously not suited. No writer could wish for a more inspiring spot. There, he found historical romance and a strangely mellow beauty rare even in English country houses. It lit him up and inspired him. And there, too, he played cricket with us and the gardeners, like any schoolboy, and his bat was pretty straight.

Despite the conflict between temperament and character, the one so impetuous and keen, the other so calm, judicial and philosophical, my father never suffered, after what one may describe as his " call," from the doubts and inner chafing that so often torment the religiously emotional

man. About his religion he never vacillated. It is a great thing always to know one's own mind and to feel no compunction. I think that accurately represents his habit and state of mind. As he never coveted, so he was never disappointed; and as he never doubted, so he was never distressed. After forty, he never knew the " tortured " mind of the religious emotionalist. His happiness came of his own natural gladness, culminating in the serenity of accomplished service and of undeviating loyalty to conscience. Nor did I ever hear him say he was weary or bored or disillusioned. It was this jubilance of health and mind which prevented him from ever becoming retrograde. For his natural conservatism, which was cautionary and subjective, was not political. He wore no Party label. Even his individualism was social, in Comte's historical sense. Standing aside, as he considered he ought to, his egotism was unselfish and in the best sense of the word relative. If, like most men who have outlived their generation, he had a temperamental aversion to " new-fangled " notions, and seemed, and even occasionally behaved, as if he regarded innovation with hostility, such was not philosophically the case; he was able to bury the dead and cry Hosannah to the living.

He was continuous, and never reached the limits of his own arterial powers. He really had perpetual youth. He grew and went on growing. His Positivism grew. He neither accepted Comte as gospel, nor sought to interpret him mechanically. Humanism did not signify dogma. Of anything of that nature he was joyfully free. At the same time he was ruthlessly decisive, formed, and, in that sense, intolerant. If an underglow of Anglo-Saxon doggedness invariably lent force to his reservations, and in public controversy he was apt to display an unphilosophic vehemence, he was too actively healthy in mind and body to live behind the walls of a sanctuary. He had no weakness of self-pity, like poor Mark Pattison. Naturally, he disapproved of much in the young generation; still, he was out in the open and never sat like a stricken sage

lamenting the past. In fiction, he perhaps did. Yet not intellectually. If he did not welcome change, he accepted it, and he was able to think retrospectively of his own contemporaries. This was so apparent that even at ninety-two it seemed inappropriate to regard him as an old man.

I think this active longevity, too, is partly explained by his religion, for I have observed a similar youth in other Positivists. In a religion which is a theory of life and of conduct, leaving undefined the entire problem of the hereafter, the happiness of the individual is so essentially confined to mortality, so dependent upon feeling and active consciousness, that the mind, divested of the cares customary in old age whether of resignation or of anticipation, remains unusually brilliant and reposeful, thus keeping fit the habit of the body. My father had no old age, properly speaking, and I have rarely known any man so calm and peaceful upon the subject of death. He was never sentimental. He viewed death happily. The doubt and anxiety that are wont to creep in with years did not assail him. He never "gave up." His interest in things remained undimmed to the last. He never spoke as if his mission was accomplished and he himself had little further to do. He scarcely regarded himself as "out of touch," or in any way as the survivor of a past generation.

He lived on and through with an actuality that was always prescient, and a continuity that seemed always applicable. He did not become reminiscent, or moody, or contemplative. He graduated with an astonishing impulse in the present, even while his mind dwelt among the books of the past and the vision of its faded glories.

This appositeness was the religion of his life. It fed and vitalized him as a youth; it kept him young, fettled to his task in extreme old age. The whole point of Humanism is this idea of sympathy, of union and of continuity. To vivify and make continuous the beauty and culture of life in the past and the future, so as to make it more perfect

in the present (which is Comte's prescription) as the concept and inspiration of age, exactly describes my father's attitude and without any doubt kept his faculties vivid and alive. A man who goes daily to the founts of poetry for sustenance does not decay, for he is continually renovating his imagination. Such was my father's practice and worship. Comte's law regarding the historical continuity of hope and effort was to my father a daily source of commemoration. It is essentially an active invocation which in my father's case was not imposed but natural, from which he drank of the very wine of life. It involves a managed and attested life which few can be expected to lead. Fortunately, he had the aptitude and the means. He made full use of it. In this way, he did not feel the burden of age. Almost, I think, it replenished him.

I believe the classics and the arts were to him very much what the old deities were to the Pagans: evocations of reverence and familiarity. Or one may say they were the rosary of his conscience. The only recompense permitted to a Positivist is the conscience of his own unremitting activity. The reciprocity of affection and influence is either felt or not felt. It is a vigorous and invigorating impulse. Despair is ruled out. Hope is personified in completion, not in any sanction or indulgence. Effort, which is life, is the only charity. And love is the sole redemption. Under such a vivid conception, age ceases to be a condition, a period, a malady; it, too, becomes a continuity of form and relativity. Systematic morality becomes spontaneous and, as such, a function of existence. For years, and right up to the end, my father lived in that enthusiasm. His whole motive lay in unceasing activity, as becomes a Humanist's devotion. And this was his essential service. To act as the denizen of a universal sympathy. To think as a causal link between the past and the present. To be himself, not for any purpose of self-love or self-gain, but as an integrator and commemorator of humanity.

A few months before his death we dined at a London club, and after a good meal, in which he drank half a

bottle of claret, he strolled out with me on the Embankment, " to have a look at the weather." He was full of vigour and enthusiasms, and his voice rang out, like a bell, exactly as I had first heard it when a child.

Chapter XI

THE END—PROGRESS

IT is to me a strange thing that Auguste Comte, who saw so presciently the need of implementing women socially—for which purpose he insisted upon the importance of the heart in any system of social law capable of the inspiration of religion—should yet have adhered to their old theological status both in the family and in the State, since by this enactment he forfeited the enthusiasm of the very sex whose educated co-operation he was particularly anxious to enlist. Comte looked upon the subject of sex from the traditional standards of ecclesiasticism, rooted in the old cult of possession, and, of course, he thought as a Frenchman, and himself deliberately and unnaturally isolated from contemporary thought and movement.

If women have so far only slightly been attracted towards Positivism, it is undoubtedly because of these social restrictions which, while removing the emotional inspiration, still debarred the sex from qualification. But humanity has taken so swift a leap forward in the last four decades that all the old connections have lost their edge and in no sphere is this more apparent than in religion. A world that can read must in time learn to think. The affections postulate freedom. To deny such freedom to woman is to set back the clock, and the modern woman can hardly be expected to slink back under the thraldom of an arbitrary civic uselessness. Comte naturally, especially in France, could not have

foreseen the vast development in attitude that has taken place since his time all over the white world, and even my father, abreast in most things, was taken aback. His reservations were of the conventional moral kind. He did not perhaps wholly understand the liberating effects of industrialism (which is not conducive to passivity) on man and woman. As regards the other sex, he, too, was inclined to think ecclesiastically. He was too steeped in past traditions to realize that in freeing woman man was strengthening himself.

Precisely the same objections were raised about the idealization of woman, which arose out of the adoration of the Madonna; yet out of that new and civilized sentiment the male heroics of chivalry were evolved, which forms so glorious a chapter in European history. It gave to the world Love as a free and ennobling sentiment. This new idealism was the direct consequence of sex release from the bondage of slavery. Without a doubt, it has proved to be one of the clear inspirations of human progress which distinguishes and separates the West from the East, where love, as a sentiment, is unknown. Without this freeing impetus, Western civilization would hardly have grown as it has. It purified and restored religion. It introduced beauty and refinement into the mediaeval home; it made men strong and courteous and courageous, and where its inspirational purity of thought took root, mankind and civilization have moved on and upwards with sure and progressive momentum.

Comte so clearly recognized this principle that he placed the heart first, as the foundation of human thought. Yet he stopped at its inference. In offering to women a religion of humanity based upon the old possessive law of sex subjection, he was, however, as stationary as the Church which he sought to displace. It was probably due to his theoretic idea of politics and of the human mechanism that controls them. He did not sufficiently realize the difficulties in the way of reform, still less the difficulties in the way of supplanting moral inducement and enthusiasm.

In his time, of course, the idea of a free woman was still regarded as a monstrosity, though it is conceivable that even Comte was not wholly above the use of tactics. We know, too, that Comte was biased against the metaphysicians, as is evident from his early writings, when he actually omitted Britain in his parent group of associate States on account of the Puritanism which had encouraged schismatic and metaphysical developments. He corrected this mistake later, and profoundly modified his original concept.

That the new sex qualification must profoundly influence the course of progress is obvious, though no doubt politically its significance may not make itself felt for some generations. Those who are alarmed at it discount history. They are probably the kind who take umbrage at all innovation. The real importance of woman's freedom lies via religion; and the question is, what use will women make, as a sex differential, of the new right of freedom of thought? What civic, national and social influence will she gradually acquire as her education proceeds along free lines, and what will be the effects of her responsibility upon the social structure? If the cradle rocks the world, the release of woman must inevitably be of deep purport to mankind, and pregnant with historical meaning. It suggests at least new beginnings. Man's age-long monopolist interpretation is the issue. In a word, will collective woman have anything to offer, to add or to—reveal?

A religion of humanity that withholds freedom from women places itself behind instead of in advance of evolution. Sociology implies that. Anyhow, woman's freedom has come as the consequence of war, and Mill saw clearer than Comte when he anticipated it. My father, too, gradually came to recognize that theory was no longer sufficient to meet a problem which, so to speak, had decided itself in most parts of Europe, though he never publicly said so. I do not suggest that he went back on his former attitude, yet he realized that mere opposition

was hardly constructive and that a new stage in evolution had been reached which Humanism could not ignore, and which Humanist thought would have to face. For it is not a question of woman "going back." Thought does not go back. The question is—will woman go forward? Towards what and under what inspiration?

If I refer to this question, it is because of its relevance to my father's life and as a key to not a few of his opinions, and also as it affects the future evolution of Humanism which, by its very nature, must constitute not doctrine but movement. Such was Comte's implicit legacy to his followers. My father himself never ceased to disclaim all pontifical authority and any such idea was utterly alien to his nature. At the same time the problem exists, and it is perhaps the chief disability with which Humanism, as a living religion, has to contend; and it accounts for the disinclination of women to regard it as a religion.

For religion is feeling, and enthusiasm is the living essential. The sociologist who approaches woman with the captive manacles of mediaevalism can expect no heartfelt response; he will be met by the clear, practical exposition of present-day fact, the key-note of which is liberation. He will have to answer the practical needs of the existing economic system which controls, and, as the heart is implicated, he will have to provide sustenance in the shape of hope, which is perhaps the only rhapsody left to us. A religion without woman "never to heaven goes." For she is the law, and through her is our deliverance.

As the "motive" of woman changes—and it is changing—she will surely want at least participation in the re-legislation of values, as they affect her and the family, and those towards whom and for whom she is co-responsible. This civic self-consciousness of woman is the precondition of co-operation. It is beginning. It almost must now evolve into a partnership of social design which will no longer tolerate a division of sex into opposites labelled intelligent and unintelligent, responsible and irresponsible, con-

tributory and non-contributory; or, to put it brutally, free and servile.

Comte so firmly believed in woman's mission that he instituted as one of the two festivals to be celebrated by Humanism a *Day of Good Women;* he also placed a number of women in the *Calendar.* The probabilities are that he lived so apart from life that sex, and the stupendous historical significance of sex, escaped his observation, and so he failed to perceive its connective causation. My father accepted Comte's view, and in his estimate of John Stuart Mill he calls for a verdict at " the bar of Good Sense and Good Feeling."

Comte, of course, placed duty before liberty, and by duty he implied submission on the part of woman; at the same time the whole conception of Humanism rests upon the injunction that no life is " solitary," that all life, therefore, is relative; and that this thought, which is modern and cuts decisively adrift from the mystic fatalism of the Middle Ages, is true and inspiring can hardly be denied. That my father failed to see not only the utility but the sheer necessity of liberating woman if she is to be civically responsible and progressive, is all the more strange in that my mother was essentially the type aimed at by Comte, and it certainly seemed anomalous that her gardener, who could barely read, should have a vote, whereas she had no civic power whatever. There was also George Eliot, a master mind who was a dear friend of my father and many others. If no life, however low or however exalted, can be " solitary " or unrelative, then a sex which is deliberately untaught and indeed only taught as sex and for sex forms a striking example of Comte's own precept, the force of which, both practically and theoretically, lies in education, in which very consciousness woman is debarred from co-operation. But the barrier in those days of sex was still instinctive. Similarly, on the vital problem of war, Comte did not see that a competitive male monopolist society will always fight, if only by virtue of its sex supremacy, and that the natural fighting instincts

of man are the sex pediment of the mono-sexual state. To regard it as socially evil for a widow to re-marry, or for a woman to seek divorce from a drunkard or a lunatic or for any reason, while leaving the stupendous question of war virtually out of a religious science and religion of progress, must in the light of the great European conflagration be regarded as academic rather than modern in idea, not, that is, in tune with the spirit and scientific freedom of the present era.

Comte's lack of vision in this respect may be ascribed largely to his prejudice against psychology, which he associated with metaphysics. In his day, psychology hardly existed, and there was no such thing as a sex psychology interpretive of history. Woman was conceived of as a being without mind or the need of intelligence, and Comte clearly intimated his unwillingness to enter into the sex nature of the problem which he " left " to the care of Clotilde de Vaux [under whose influence he fell in his latter years], who unfortunately died prematurely and before her character had time to modify his. Thus both Comte and Mill were strongly re-influenced by women. In Comte's design women were classed with philosophers—they were to be barred from political power: philosophers because of their unsuitability for practical and detail work; women because of the intrinsic nature of their influence which Comte defined as purely feeling. And as wealth was corrupting, so it was to the poorer classes that Comte looked for " womanly perfection." This is really the key explanation of the failure of Positivism: it omitted sex and it omitted economics, and for some peculiar reason Comte failed to associate women with the motive theory of society. In an era of silk stockings Positivism as originally propounded is a torso, and a day set apart to commemorate " Good Women " can exercise little regenerating influence so long as it is bound under the cloistered apex of a mediaeval restriction.

Alas ! even genius rarely sees beyond its epoch. Comte's extraordinary clarity of view stopped at sex, and

it was left to Mill to draw the obvious inference of the new sociology, which surely postulated an equalitarian society. It is characteristic in this respect that Herbert Spencer equally failed by going to the opposite extreme to Comte and inventing a social religion without feeling. The one may be said to be typical of Catholic, the other of Puritan opinion; yet between them they opened the floodgates of our modern attitude, though neither creed has met with much response from women, and both are obviously to-day in need of revivifying modification. The problem of subordinating Politics to Morals is as real now as it was in Comte's time, and perhaps even more scientifically urgent, and if this is the fundamental concern of religion, and we must still assume that it is, we can hardly claim to have advanced much further since Comte endeavoured to establish a rationalist "feudalism" in which, as in the Middle Ages, the social instinct predominated. If women, philosophers and people, as seen by Comte, are to be the three essential elements of social regeneration, it would seem indispensable to give them practical power, i.e. liberty, without which, in a practical world, they must remain unpractical. And this is the condition to which we have advanced, and it perhaps is the explanation of what we describe as our existing spiritual "anarchy."

The separation of spiritual and temporal power has become politically a reality, but still the "organization of sympathy" is far from being realized and mankind has become more materialist than ever. This is the modern problem of religion and of all social theory. Clearly, it was quite unforeseen by Comte and Herbert Spencer. The new feudalism is capital, in which woman is as directly interested as man. It is no longer a question of intellectual theory, of passing from this theology to that, as Comte defined, or of avoiding the treacherous rocks of metaphysics. The ruling power of man is his economic mechanism, and it is not only the great leveller, but even the "religion," of our time. In an age of results, theory has

ceased to be man's governing consideration, and now it is philosophy that is hardly vocal. The nineteenth century closed a great intellectual era of which Comte was perhaps the outstanding thinker. We start afresh. The problem of moral force is to-day how to give it sanity, since the heart is so apt to run away with it. In a word, the nineteenth century had no psychology. It was a movement of release, but only a movement.

Other reasons for Comte's somewhat paradoxical attitude no doubt lay in his unworldliness on the one side, and his " revolutionary " or French mind which produced the " Polity " and led him to expect automatic results, even like the politician who prophesies a " new world." Comte sought to establish a new chivalry, hence he actually wished to abolish the right of woman to " inherit." One can hardly be surprised if the sex did not jump at this " revolutionary " dispensation which in a commercial world would have placed women, body and soul, under the will of man. It is here that, humanly speaking, Positivism itself has proved " un-relative," and in particular as regards women whose freedom lies through economics. Thus Comte's sociology has failed to captivate woman, though it laid the foundation of her freedom and sought to establish her civic responsibility. Comte did not foresee the power of industrialism, and in shutting out woman from economics he was supplanted by the political materialsim of Karl Marx.

It is curious to reflect to-day, though no doubt the contention will be disputed, that Marx who gave Socialism to the world, and Comte who gave Sociology, can be seen to be the two dominant creative minds during the last hundred years, and that as we stand now these two contributions to social science, which at the time Marx conceived as revolution without religion, and Comte conceived as religion without revolution, constitute the two pivotal lines of thought and evolution in our post-War civilization. Both Comte and Marx were children of the revolutionary era, who anticipated results. Both seem

to have greatly underrated the development of credit which is the world's ruling power to-day, and we may yet see a purified statement of Socialism which as a theory is clearly in need of compendious revision; and a converging movement in favour of sociology which, as a fact, is the underlying principle of most modern State enterprise. Between the two men there is the root difference of moral elevation, and it was this marked, if often not perceived, divergence of view that led people to regard my father's activities as inconsistent. Yet in reality he was only too consistent. He never lost sight of the moral principle. Hence some of his whilom Labour friends did not understand his motives, thus as regards the politicalization of Trade Unionism.

Comte's idea was to work with the proletariat spiritually, but Socialism is based upon materialism, hence the cleft which divides these social theories to-day.

Thus the materialism of Karl Marx contrasts queerly with the temporal spiritualism of Comte's sociology; for Socialism, with its "materialist conception of history," has isolated itself from the historical sequence of human thought and endeavour, which under religious law, however inverted or perverted, has always had a moral enthusiasm. The test lies in post-War Russia, where a static Socialism shuts out moral force and so progress. One cannot rule out moral force which also is the law of art. And this is the strength of sociology which embraces all classes and interests, and as it is based on historical law, does not look to force as the correcting instrument but to the slow, arduous, self-conscious growth of humanizing reason arising out of the fellowship and co-operative spirit of mankind. Sociology implies co-operation by which, and through which alone man will divest himself of the competitive system, whereas Socialism, by its very political nature, is fiercely competitive. It is a paradoxical thought that Comte looked to women to provide the redeeming balance. Such may well be the social problem of this century.

When my father, as a young man, " shocked " his friends by appearing as the champion of Trade Unionism, he was acting as a Positivist, who looked to " Labour " to provide the sociological power of innovation. When, years later, my father " shocked " political Labour by his consistent championship of evolution instead of revolution, he was again acting as a Positivist, who was opposed to force politics and so to the entire conception of Marxian history. Misunderstood by Capital in his youth, he was equally misunderstood by Labour in his old age. Woman and Capital have thus proved the obstruction to the idea of Humanism, yet had Comte advocated the freedom of woman as the outstanding basis of a co-operative sociology, Marx's physical theories might never have grown into the anarchic dimensions now observed in all parts of Europe. Comte offered the proletarian woman nothing, for he took away her containing mysticism, and he gave her no fighting policy; in short, her inspiration hung on the grace of man. None the less, sociology remains the true answer to Socialism which in its final analysis is force or politics. And as sociology means a science of State in place of a fighting polity of State, it is clear that the freedom of woman is its indispensable condition. Hence Socialism will probably grow until sociology takes the place of mere politics. What is called the war between Capital and Labour is essentially the issue of sociological governance. If Comte omitted capitalism, Marx omitted religion or feeling. In the political tumult of " logorhœa," which would seem to be the problem of modern democracy, the only alternative to force lies through sociology as the reason of state and service, and in his attempt to infuse the art of life with religious sentiment Comte offered mankind principles of peaceful evolution, which have yet to be tried and still seem to be the only hopeful solution of the eternal deception of strife. Comte has been described as an unpractical " Catholic." He neither won woman nor the proletariat, both of whom he conceived as his main " practical " supporters. But his sociology lives, and in

the international sphere it is even being tentatively applied by force. There is no reason why it should not be developed economically. A world that can no longer believe in speculative truth may in time come to consider relative or applicable theory, which is even what true " Christianity " implies; and if and when this desirable condition arises Humanism will have automatically asserted itself. That is practically what Positivism means. Otherwise, the politics that destroyed ancient Greece may eventually disrupt and destroy modern Europe under the " materialist conception " of religion and of—chemistry.

As we cast about to-day in the post-War world, we behold a movement similar to that which confronted our fathers before the appearance of Darwin's book, and on all sides we hear of grave " controversies " regarding words and interpretations that roused the Victorians to anger in the middle of the last century. Such " crises " in the Church are a periodic feature of our life, and perhaps a sign of health, but if Fitzjames Stephen could be resurrected he would indeed gasp with astonishment at the spectacle of the new little " war " waged about the definition of transubstantiation, and the revolt of the clergy who seek, through the re-imposition of symbolism, to suffocate the meanings which the Victorians proclaimed with so valid and valiant a philosophy.

If we look back to the Britain after Waterloo, we find typically similar conditions to those confronting us to-day. Then, the fear was the French Revolution; now, it is Bolshevism. The process of tightening-up, of defensive contrast, is quite characteristically insular. After the French movement, the old-fashioned, rollicking divine of the eighteenth century was gradually superseded by contrasting Methodism, which closed in upon this country according to the precept of Cardinal Newman, who advocated a far more " gloomy, fierce and bigoted " religion, and sought it in a return to Rome. It was at this period of closing down, of obscurantism, that the great Victorians began their clarifying and thought-liberating

work. The recent European cataclysm has uprooted many of these foundations. Now, the old pressure is at work seeking our reclamation; and again the spirit of man is chaotic, crying for it knows not what. When death is cheap, so are its phenomena. It is conceivable that we may have reached a point of flux and uncertainty in which Reason will once more lose authority and in the turmoil of doubt and disquiet the restrictive " balm " of sentiment will capture the imagination in the vain pursuit of emotional quietism. The reaction of war always takes queer forms, and when all seek escape the result is only too frequently submission. If so, then this century will be a reaction to the Victorian century, when yet again men will fight about the mysticism and superstition of that dread phrase in history, " foundations of belief." Such was my father's life-struggle. The " great " Victorians were star-finders. Step by step, they pushed through the obscurantism of their time, and when they emerged they left us with at least solid definitions to improve and work upon. This age of science is the result. Hence our future can hardly lie in an escape from science. Rather it will consist in a socialization of human morality by which science can be made morally serviceable. This, roughly, was what my father understood by religion.

My father wrote once, I forget where, that " convention is the prosody of art." He meant that exemplarily. It was that spirit, moral and religious and restrictive, which threw him into conflict with the artist world. That is the difficulty of the strictly moral mind—in its aptitude for teaching it is apt to legislate in dimensions of time. Art is discovery, it can acknowledge no constable, as surely every successive generation proclaims. If convention was the key of creation, nothing new would originate and man would stagnate, and especially in the realm of thought is this true. Hence the danger of all organized systems of belief. Positivism must be evolution, or it, too, will fade into theory, as Comte clearly recognized; indeed, his whole system depends upon historical sequence and the

relationship of man to his values, in a word, upon relativity. That is where all church systems have failed, and where individual and collective man is now thrusting upward. For all our amassed wisdom, we know so little. Yet wonder remains, illimitable and incomprehensible, to ease and light our way. And the prosody of that is freedom naked and unashamed, for such is man's genius. Not to shut out, but to disclose. Not to idolize, but to discover. Not to keep, but to renew and renovate and release.

" The end—progress "—such was Comte's principle and bequeathment. I suppose the most a man can do in this world is to make some slight contribution to thought and knowledge, and to leave it to others to expand and carry on. The place of Comte in history is thus assured. He gave a new meaning to the past and a new motive to his time. He was perhaps the first modern religious philosopher and the first to attempt to harness all the greatness and virtue of mankind to a thesis of spiritual social continuity in working contact with humanity. That he sensibly changed the current of thought is undeniable. He did more. He established the first principles of relativity which to-day is the accepted criterion of scientific investigation. To introduce this idea into his own country was my father's mission. It was no light task. It clashed with all manner of institutional beliefs and prejudices; it clashed with the individualist projection of our own synthetists and explorers and even excited the ire of Ruskin. Thus my father became a defender of faith. He had to fight the prejudice which was the legacy of Napoleon, and the insularity which was its outcome. He had to be a French grammarian and he had to keep a balance. He even had to explain that Comte had no pretensions to a Holy See of divinity situated in the " Latin Quarter " of Paris, and to beg forgiveness for his opponent's lamentable ignorance of the French language. For many years he was a man with his back to the wall.

Little wonder if his temper was quick. I often wished later on that I had known all this and could have helped

him, but under the old Victorian discipline it was not filial for a son to sympathize with his father; moreover, we were children in the years of his militancy, and naturally had but little conception of the struggle in which he was engaged and of its provocative nature, the acerbity of which to-day it is hard to realize. My father was at one time regarded as a " danger " to society. When I look back upon the fortitude with which he met these attacks and the persistency with which he fought them, I cannot but feel how lofty must have been the idealism which enabled him to bear and sustain his efforts for a cause which inevitably deprived him of worldly attainment. For sixty years his work was one of sheer moral enthusiasm. There were no rewards to look to in this world, or the next. Such manifest impersonalism can only be described as religion. It was the life of a teacher of Humanism as founded by Comte.

My father and the Positivists of his time at least did something tangible for both the past and the present. They promoted thought and burst through doors that were growing old and rusty. They limbered some of the neglected meanings of old time to the seeds of the future and added to evolution the new thought of social sympathy. My father limited himself to that interpretation. It was a self-imposed discipline of social duty and to him a religion. He himself had no illusions about Positivism, either as creed or educational system; or about Comte, its projector. Fallibility and movement are the very essence of sociology. Often, I think, he found the task difficult. It kept him away and apart from the life-throb of the university where he had his heart and the walls of which he so loved. It cast him into strife and controversy with men he venerated. It threw him, as creator, against the government of his own moral code. Yet he held on, and in his last written words he attested to his life's belief. A memorial service was held in Bath Cathedral, as he would have liked; surely a fitting commemoration of his work of conservation and his spirit of progressive unity.

It is said that a religion of earthly attachment cannot provide man with sufficient inducement or satisfy his restless soul. Positivism was the first attempt to disprove this superstition, and from it have flowed the numerous sects and schisms of " rationalism " that are building up the temple of sociology. Unconscious, or perhaps one ought to say, unadmitted Positivism is really the leading motive of all serious social thought to-day, and if it be contended that Comte was a dreamer and that Humanity can never find religion in the service of its own Progress, one can at least point to my father—the first English Humanist—as proof to the contrary.

We may to-day entertain scruples about an " authoritarian " moral State such as Comte conceived, for man as yet can hardly be trusted with authority, and existing experiments in Socialism are rather like past experiments in Liberty, and to us neither the names of Lenin nor Napoleon offer convincing inducements. Intellectually, authority is always degrading; thus, the only perfection would seem a State in which every man is an individualist, and the sum or whole is an individualism of peace. My father was certainly an individualist in that sense. When we think of religion and of the use of religion, that, after all, is the problem, and it revolves around the eternal question of whether man is to be guided by law or by his own free will.

As Oscar Wilde wrote in one of his early works, " The Soul of Man ": " To the thinker, the most tragic fact in the whole of the French Revolution is not that Marie Antoinette was killed for being a queen, but that the starved peasant of the Vendée voluntarily went out to die for the hideous cause of feudalism." He might have added that such is the tragic lesson of all history, summed up in the word, ignorance.

It is the riddle of evolution. Oscar Wilde himself was to disprove the wisdom of a philosophy of " pleasure," and so far we have not got beyond a theory of " pain." The Humanist stands in between these two extremes.

My father's life was an attempt to prove the possibility of a human religion which ignored the supernatural, and to testify to the reasonableness of such a belief, which necessarily implies a vigorous belief in oneself, since such is the only way to inspire and invigorate others. To quote Wilde again. It will be " what the Greeks sought for, but could not, except in thought, realize completely, because they had slaves, and fed them; it will be what the Renaissance sought for, but could not realize completely, except in art, because they had slaves, and starved them." We may now build on this thought and say that neither can we realize it so long as we have women slaves, and restrict them. All progress is a process of release. In this sense the twentieth century is already intellectually Humanist. My father's work was that, and his inveterate optimism and moral tranquillity were at least in harmony with his measured and directed individualism. That is essentially to be. And whatever he lost or missed by the roadside, he unquestionably fulfilled that lofty and central intention.

His whole life was even, regular and creative. He found in the service of Man not only satisfaction but an inexhaustible field of inspiration, for which he wrought with athletic and truly religious devotion. It gave him culture in place of dogma; satisfied emotion in the place of worship; and the discipline of example and moral relationship. If progress is the development of order, as Comte maintained, moral enthusiasm must be its idea or religion, and this my father had in abundance.

It may be asked: What of the soul, which science does not recognize; that soul which is the spirit of hope? That, of course, is a key question. I can only say that my father's " soul " (using the word in the theological sense assigned to it) was as actual and emotional as that of any man who ever felt the call of Religion and was willing to suffer and die for it. Indeed, it was this very soulfulness of his that annoyed the great Agnostics of his time, who were then more interested in pulling down than in

building up, and but for which he probably would not have been so singled out for attack by his fellow philosophers. My father's soul, which took the form of love of humanity, was such that it made him one of the greatest enthusiasts of his time, and even truculent in its assertion and reiteration. The problem of survival presented no "mystery" to him, for he had discarded mystery, or, as he sometimes put it: "If I am to burn everlastingly for my sincerity on earth—*Adsum*."

To many people, this sanity, logic, or "unimaginativeness," as I have heard it styled, made my father uninteresting, and I have even known it to be put down to a want of humour. Mankind hugs its illusions, and a man who refuses to deceive himself is not likely to deceive others. Such was my father's position towards the unknown. He was gifted with judgment which to the public is a dull thing, since it generally crosses the fluctuating beliefs and fashions of the day; moreover, most people would far rather know what is "being said" than what is being "thought." In my father's case, this wholesomeness of mind was entirely natural, it was the pediment of his intellectual and religious structure. He could not "dabble," and all make-believe was physically abhorrent to him. The sentiment of survival meant no more to him than any other speculative sentiment; in short, his curiosity ceased just where mankind is apt to find curiosity interesting. His poetry was life. He was in the full sense of the word the opposite to the mystic and all his associate clan.

Hence there is nothing to say about his soul except that, like all his other organs and functions, it was bewilderingly normal. It never troubled him and he never troubled other people with it. How many religious men can claim as much? In any case, it was "taught" and associate. His mind grew into it and enlarged it and made it practical; he could at least claim that it was his own. I see no reason why a philosophy of life should not be spiritual in its affirmation, just as a spiritual man may

sometimes be a philosopher. That was Comte's thesis, and such was the motive of my father's life. He was a man who believed in mankind.

That a man can live and die in this belief, can himself be happy, creative, useful and wise, a good citizen and an honest workman, doing harm to none and wishing well to all, whose long married life may be cited as an almost unexampled flight of love and sympathy, and against whom no one can point the finger of scorn and say that in this or that his ardour, his sincerity, his humanity and his philosophy fell short of the tests of standard or of endurance—to this, at least, my father's life gives testimony. He showed that life was as sweet as death and perhaps as important, and that religion could be a quite determinable expression of living thought and action in this world without fear or question of the next. He might be described as the Horatio of Auguste Comte, holding the bridge of the new dispensation for a brief yet needful while. I think one can claim that much, even if it be true, and my father often quoted the line, that all " our little systems have their day." He was one of the links in the organic continuity of mankind, and one of its gladdest workers.

Though he outlived nearly all his contemporaries, and beheld a world slipping away from many of the beliefs, standards, ideas, and institutions in which he had grown up, and in the wreckage and barrenness of war he must have felt rather remote in his loneliness and spiritual detachment, he remained exact and alert, hopeful and vigilant to the very morning when, as he rose from bed, he was struck down from sudden failure of the heart, even as he had always hoped might be the merciful end.

His ashes, mingled with those of his wife, rest in accordance with his last wish in an urn deposited in the Chapel of Wadham College, Oxford, whence as a young man, like a pilgrim bearing the distaff of doubt, he had set out sixty-eight years before in quest of truth and harmony.

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